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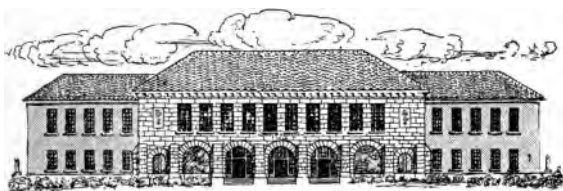
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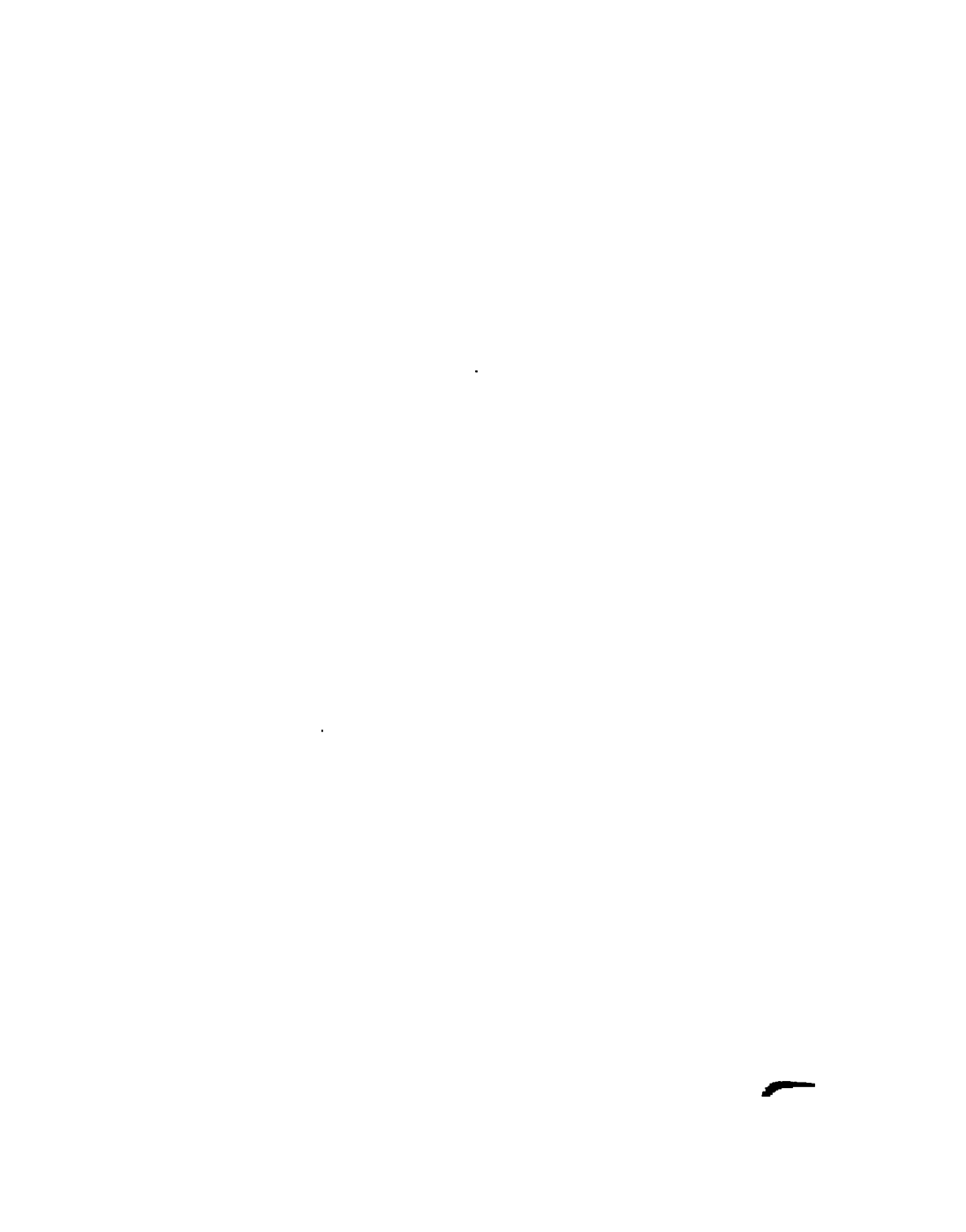
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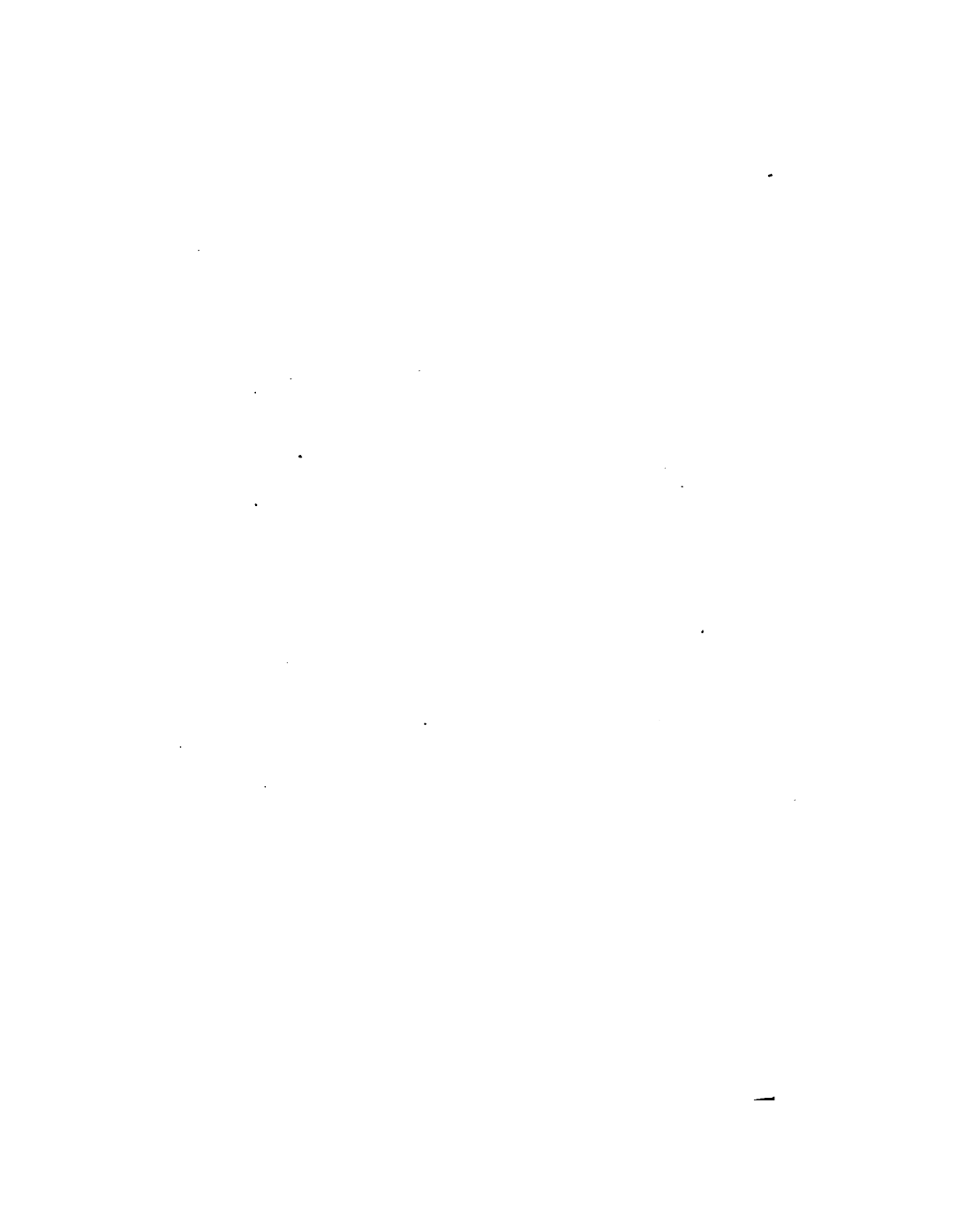
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PIERRE CORNEILLE (1643)



LE CID

PAR

PIERRE CORNEILLE

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND VOCABULARY

BY

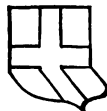
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PREFACE

An attempt has been made in this edition of "Le Cid" to comprise within the necessary limitations of space as much material as possible to assist the student in appreciating the work as a piece of literature and in forming a true idea of its great value as a historical and social document. The text follows the Marty-Laveaux edition (in the Hachette series of "Les Grands Écrivains de France") except that the modern *ai* has been substituted for the *oi* of the older orthography.

The text of the drama is followed by an account of the Quarrel of the Cid, related as far as possible in the language of the participants or of contemporaries, or of the earliest historians of the affair. Then comes the "Examen" which contains the poet's answer to his critics. In the notes to this "Examen" are contained the main objections of Scudéry and the Academy, which Corneille tries to answer. The Introduction contains a brief account of the poet's life; of the French drama before the "Cid"; of Guillen de Castro's Spanish original; and of the theatrical and social environment in which this tragedy was produced. The Vocabulary furnishes all the means for a faithful and intelligent translation of the text. The meaning of each word has been chosen with reference to the contexts in which it occurs; and the student should be made to select the most applicable meaning given. Care has also been taken to point out the difference between seventeenth-century and modern usage of words. The Notes are given up to syntactical and literary-historical comment, which, necessarily, has been limited to the bare essentials.

No student should begin the reading of the "Cid" until he has well in mind at least as many points as are treated in the Introduction, nor should he leave it till he has read the account of the Quarrel of the Cid and thought upon its significance for the future development of the French classic drama.

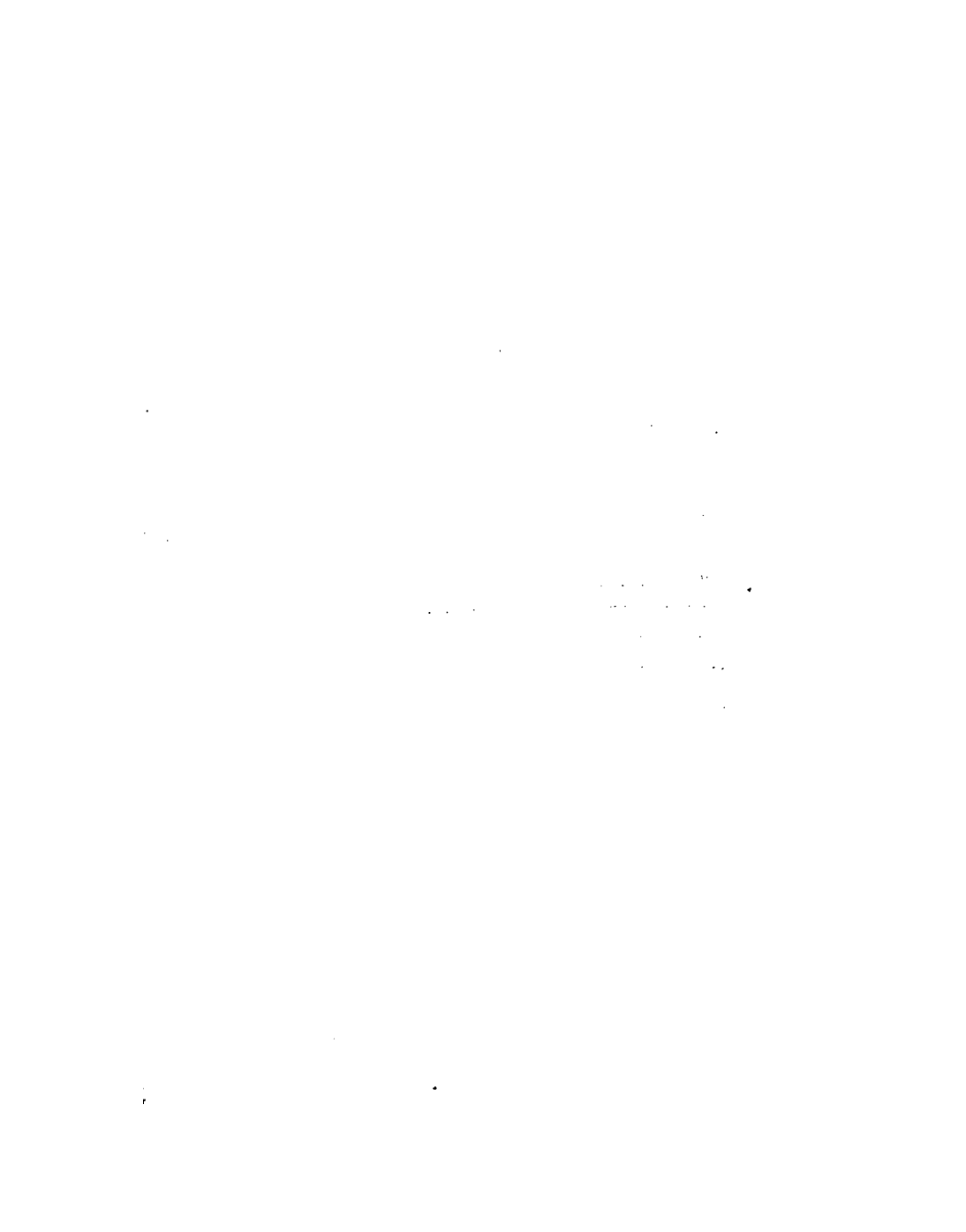
The student desiring to continue his studies on Corneille might begin with the following books: G. Lanson, "Pierre Corneille," Paris, 1905; Petit de Julleville, "Langue et littérature française," Paris, 1897, vol. IV, chaps. iv-vi; Guizot, "Corneille et son temps," Paris, 1852; Sainte-Beuve, "Portraits littéraires," vol. I, and "Nouveaux lundis," vol. VII; F. Bouquet, "Points obscurs et nouveaux de la vie de Pierre Corneille," Paris, 1888; Jules Levallois, "Corneille inconnu," Paris, 1876; Guillaume Huszár, "P. Corneille et le théâtre espagnol," Paris, 1903; Ernest Martinenche, "La comedia espagnole en France," Paris, 1900; J. B. Segall, "Corneille and the Spanish drama," New York, 1902; the above-mentioned edition of the "Grands Écrivains" series (with the "Lexique" for the study of the language, which forms the two last volumes of the edition); Godefroy, "Lexique comparé de la langue de Corneille et de la langue du xvii^e siècle en général," Paris, 1862; A. Haase, "Syntaxe française du xvii^e siècle," Paris, 1898; C. Ayer, "Grammaire comparée de la langue française," Paris, 1900. The following are indispensable for any thorough study of Corneille: Emile Picot, "Bibliographie Cornélienne," Paris, 1876; P. Le Verdier et E. Pelay, "Additions à la Bibliographie Cornélienne," Paris, 1908.

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INTRODUCTION

FRENCH DRAMA BEFORE CORNEILLE

When Jean Racine spoke at the reception of Thomas Corneille into the French Academy in 1685, he spoke of the work of his great brother Pierre, who had died the year before, in these terms: "Vous, monsieur, qui non seulement étiez son frère, mais qui avez couru longtemps une même carrière que lui, vous savez les obligations que lui a notre poésie; vous savez en quel état se trouvait la scène française lorsqu'il commença à travailler. Quel désordre, quelle irrégularité! Nul goût, nulle connaissance des véritables beautés du théâtre; les auteurs aussi ignorants que les spectateurs; la plupart des sujets extravagants et dénués de vraisemblance; point de mœurs, point de caractères; la diction encore plus vicieuse que l'action, et dont les pointes et de misérables jeux de mots faisaient le plus bel ornement: en un mot toutes les règles de l'art, celles même de l'honnêteté et de la bienséance partout violées." Little allowance needs to be made for the circumstances under which these words were spoken, for their description of the French stage as our poet found it corresponds very closely to the reality.

In "La Défense et Illustration de la Langue Française" (1549), which served as the manifesto of the group of poets known as the Pléiade, its author Joachim du Bellay had this encouragement for young poets with dramatic aspirations: "Quant aux comédies et tragédies, si les rois et les républiques les voulaient restituer en leur ancienne dignité, qu'ont usurpée les farces

et moralités, je serais bien d'opinion que tu t'y employasses, et si tu le veux faire pour l'ornement de ta langue, tu sais où tu en dois trouver les archétypes." The poets responded to the call with rather more alacrity than did the kings and republics. In 1552 France had its first regular classic tragedy, the "Cléopâtre captive," and its first classic comedy, the "Eugène," both composed by the same author, Étienne Jodelle, and both played the same night with great enthusiasm by the poet and his friends. All through the rest of the century classic tragedies and occasional classic comedies were composed and represented, for the most part at schools and private mansions, but they were too strictly classical; too little adapted to the needs of stage representation to gain any hold upon the popular favor. Their main service was to establish a tradition and point out the direction in which the future French drama was to go. Enthusiastic students of Horace and Aristotle and their Italian commentators, following as a model the declamatory tragedies of Seneca, these authors took the first steps toward the adoption of those rules which were to guide and often embarrass French dramatic poets for two centuries to come. According to the fundamental principle of the authorities consulted, the dramatic poet must strive to present his action or plot in such a way as to preserve an atmosphere of the strictest probability. On this basis the Italian commentators of Aristotle's "Poetica," notably Castelvetro, had in part discovered, and in part deduced, the rules of the three unities — the most definite, as well as the most frequently cited, of all these doctrinaire conventions. The unity of action required that everything not indispensable to the development of the plot should be eliminated from the play; the unity of time prescribed that the action represented on the stage should be such as might with probability take place within twenty-four hours; the unity of place required that the scene of the action should be limited *to one definite locality*.

France in the sixteenth century had no theaters and no actors in the modern sense of the word. Troupes of Italian actors brought to France by the Italian influences at the court far out-ranked the French, who were counted, and on the whole quite justly, as the very dregs of society. But near the beginning of the seventeenth century two independent companies of French actors settled in Paris, one at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the other at the Théâtre du Marais, and directly a French theater sprang up which soon came to absorb the best literary activities of the nation. The most striking figure of the period is one Alexandre Hardy (1579?-1631) who came to Paris with a troupe of actors about the beginning of the century and for the next thirty years worked with the most feverish activity to supply his company with plays and himself with bread. In those days the dramatists were considered of little importance. Their names rarely appeared on the announcements, and they received but little for their works — not more than two or three écus (less than five dollars) for a play, plus a small share of the receipts at the door; even this stopped as soon as the play was printed, when it became common property. Under these conditions the unfortunate poet produced in the course of thirty years upwards of seven hundred pieces. Often in the course of two or three days he would produce a five-act tragedy or pastoral play or tragic-comedy — and in verse! One would not expect great literary merit under such circumstances, and there is none; but he formed a public, and that in itself is enough to give him no small claim to the title of founder of the French theater. He could hardly have hoped to observe the rules of the classic drama had he so chosen, and there is little evidence of such aspirations. The unities of place and time are disregarded almost completely. It is significant that a certain unity of action prevails throughout: clearness and conciseness are everywhere preferred to the somewhat confusing though often impressive mass effects of our early

stage. Battle scenes and crowds of people, as they appear in Shakespeare for example, are not to be found in Hardy's works. This preëminently French tendency to precision and clearness, thus seen *au naturel* as it were, is very significant for the appreciation of the drama that is to follow.

Hardy's work was imperfect and crude, but it attracted the public and aroused in it a taste for a drama of emotion and action such as could not be found in the theatrical representations to which it was accustomed. It was not long before more gifted and cultured poets turned their attention to this new and promising field. In their works exaggeration of expression, excessive sentimentality, combined with great lack of taste, are the predominating defects. These may all be at least suggested by the following passage taken from the first important work of this class of poets: "Les Amours tragiques de Pyrame et Thisbé" by Théophile de Viau (1617). Pyramus apostrophizes the lion who has, as he believes, devoured his mistress:

En toi, lyon, mon âme a fait ses funérailles,
 Qui digères déjà mon cœur dans tes entrailles;
 Reviens, et me fais voir au moins mon ennemi,
 Encores tu ne m'as dévoré qu'à demi.

In an earlier scene he is describing how deeply he is in love with her:

Mais je me sens jaloux de tout ce qui te touche,
 De l'air qui si souvent entre et sort par ta bouche;

 Ton ombre suit ton corps de trop près, ce me semble,
 Car nous deux seulement devons aller ensemble, — etc.

These characteristic faults were continued in the pastoral plays which became for a brief season the favorite type of dramatic production. In these plays idyllic shepherds made idyllic *love to idyllic shepherdesses* amid surroundings equally unreal

and idyllic. Insipid gallantry, unreal adventures, magic arts, absence of psychology, an absolute lack of dramatic probability, soon made these plays as unsatisfactory in their way as were the rough though vigorous productions of Hardy.

However, an effort to make dramatic compositions conform to the requirements of probability and common sense soon made itself felt. In 1630 Jean Chapelain (1595-1674) writes his letter on the necessity of adopting the rule, already in vogue among the Italians, which prescribed that the events represented in a play should be such as might be reasonably supposed to have taken place within the space of twenty-four hours. In 1635, called upon by Cardinal Richelieu to revise a "*comédie d'apparat*" ("La Comédie des Tuileries") which his Eminence was having prepared for representation, he reports: "I have tried by an effort of art to give a specimen of the perfect comedy, in such a way that the severity of the rules may not spoil the charm, that the invention and arrangement may be exquisite and new, the climax and dénouement noble, that the moral habits (of the characters) and the passions may have their place, and that pleasure may serve as a means to profit and instruction." A few days later we find him sending for the cardinal's perusal "la copie de ces Règles de la Comédie." The Abbé d'Olivet, one of the authors of the "*Histoire de l'Académie française*," asserts that it was Chapelain who forced the acceptance of the rules upon the actors and "the poets in their service." While these influences were at work behind the scenes as it were, the matter was brought before the general public by Jean Mairet in the preface to "*Silvanire*" (1631) and by Jean Ogier de Gombauld in the preface to his "*Amaranthe*" of the same year. These two writers stated the rules of the three unities as they understood them, and maintained that they had observed them in their plays. There was however considerable reluctance shown on the part of actors and poets. Corneille declared that

he knew nothing of the unities when he composed his first play, the "Mélite" (1629), and Scudéry robustly declared his non-acceptance of them in his "Lygdamon et Lydias" of the same year. But the rules were not to be denied, and in the season of 1634-1635 Mairet with the "Sophonisbe," Corneille with the "Médée," and Scudéry with "La Mort de César" each tried to produce a tragedy which should conform to the precepts of the ancients as they understood them. In 1636-1637 the "Cid" appeared. The discussion which arose over its merits and defects as a work of dramatic art was referred to the newly established French Academy, which formulated the judgment known as the "Sentiments de l'Académie française sur le Cid" (1637). The rules and conventions governing dramatic composition were thereby fixed, and were to remain in force for nearly two centuries, until the representation of the first plays of Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo in 1829 and 1830.

To this rapid formation of dramatic art corresponded an equally rapid progress along material lines. Here much was due to the patronage of Richelieu, who took a very keen interest in the theater and is even said to have had aspirations of his own as a dramatist. Be that as it may, it is certain that he took a very active part in the betterment of theatrical conditions. He had ordinances passed which transformed the theater from the place of ill repute which it had been to one of respectability. He had a theater constructed in his own palace, at great expense, upon which were given plays in which he had a special interest or which had been especially well received by the public. Corneille tells us, for example, that the "Cid" was twice played there. He bestowed pensions upon a number of the more promising poets, among them Corneille himself. "As a single man, when he is elevated to the highest positions, is sufficient to stir up a whole kingdom," says Pellisson in his "History of the French Academy," "so the passion which the cardinal had for dramatic

poetry brought it [at the time of the "Cid"] to a higher point than it had ever reached among the French. All those who felt in themselves any talent did not fail to work for the theater: it was a means of approaching the nobles and of being favored by the prime minister. . . . Not only did he attend with pleasure all the new plays, but he even liked to confer with poets about their works, to see them in process of formation, and to furnish the subjects. And if he knew a man of talent who was not led by his own inclination to work in this field, he would lead him to it gradually by all sorts of cares and attentions (*soins et caresses*).'' Wealthy noblemen were quick to follow the example of the great minister, and this patronage produced a sort of Augustan age for the drama, which developed with extraordinary rapidity and richness. The decade from 1630 to 1640 is the dawn of the modern French drama in general and of the classic French drama in particular; and to the "Cid," which appeared towards its close, might well be applied the extravagant verse which Scudéry wrote for the first edition of Corneille's comedy "La Veuve" in 1634:

Le soleil s'est levé, retirez-vous étoiles.

THE POET

Pierre Corneille was born in Rouen, capital city of Normandy, the sixth of June, 1606. His was a family of the middle class, quite numerous, well known, and universally respected. His father was an officer of the realm, *maître des eaux et forêts* (water and forest commissioner). Pierre was the eldest of six children; was educated in a Jesuit school, and then studied law as it was the custom in his family for the eldest son to do. He was admitted to the bar in 1624, but seems to have made but little use of his legal training till five years later, when he purchased the office of *avocat du roi au siège des eaux et forêts* (attorney general in the department of waters and forests) and also that of *premier*

avocat du roi en l'amirauté de France au siège général de la table de marbre du Palais (attorney general in the department of harbors). He occupied these positions for over twenty years and fulfilled their duties conscientiously. In 1640 he married; seven years later, after being twice rejected, he was received into the French Academy. He gave up his offices in 1650, and twelve years later moved with his family to Paris, where he lived in straitened circumstances to the end. A pension of 1200 livres was granted him, but was paid irregularly and at best was insufficient to meet his pecuniary needs. One son died in 1667 at the age of fourteen years; another, a cavalry officer, was killed at the siege of Grave in 1674, the year in which Corneille gave his last play, the "Suréna." Disheartened by private griefs, he could find no consolation in more external conditions, for fashions had changed; society was actuated by new ideals, a new generation of poets was in favor. He died on the night of September 30, 1684, needy, disappointed, broken down, almost forsaken.

His long career as a dramatist may be divided into three main periods. The first, the time of his preparation, begins with the "Mélite" (a comedy which is said to have been based on an episode of his own life). It was played in 1629. A tragi-comedy, the "Clitandre," came in 1632, and in 1633-1635 four comedies: "La Veuve," "La Galerie du palais," "La Suivante," and "La Place Royale." These plays are important for the history of the French drama because they present something of the life of the times, introducing French scenes and characters as opposed to the stereotyped forms produced hitherto in imitation of the Italian intrigue plays. In 1635 he became one of the society of five authors whom Richelieu gathered about him to assist him in the production of plays for which he was to furnish the plots and the general supervision. Corneille is said to have composed the third act of their first play, "La Comédie des Tuileries," as his share in this work. It is further alleged

that he failed to agree with his illustrious patron, and that this was the reason for his ceasing to be one of the members of this company. In this same year he produced his first regular tragedy, the "*Médée*," a close imitation—almost a translation—of the like-named tragedy attributed to Seneca. The next year saw the end of his preparatory period in "*L'Illusion comique*," which was played only a few months before the "*Cid*."

The "*Cid*" begins for Corneille, and indeed for all France, the period of great dramatic creations. The great series which it introduces is as follows: "*Horace*" (1640); "*Cinna*" (1640); "*Polyeucte*" (1643); "*Pompée*" (1643 or 1644). Then two comedies based on Spanish models: "*Le Menteur*" and "*Suite du Menteur*" (1643-1644); these comedies may be said to bear something of the same relation to later French comedy that the "*Cid*" does to later tragedy. In 1644 the poet again took up tragedy, composing the "*Rodogune*," which he considered (at times at least) as his greatest work. We note in it a tendency to heighten the interest by complication of situation at the expense of the development of the characters—a tendency which becomes stronger from this time on. 1645 "*Théodore*"; 1646 "*Héraclius*"; written in 1648, but not played till 1650, "*Andromède*," a spectacle play with music and great scenic effects—a sort of precursor of the modern opera; 1649-1650 "*Don Sanche d'Aragon*"; 1651 "*Nicomède*"; 1652 "*Pertharite, roi des Lombards*." This play, which failed completely, marks the close of the second period, the period of the poet's greatest power. After its failure the poet renounced the stage and retired to his home in Rouen, intending to live in retirement, devoting his leisure to the composition of religious works. There seems good ground for believing that the failure of this play was not, as often asserted, the main reason for Corneille's retirement from dramatic work, but it probably furnished the last touch that turned the balance. A closer study of the poet's life will

suggest many reasons which cannot be considered here. He remained true to his purpose for six years, during which time he was at work composing his metrical translation of the "Imitatio Christi" of Thomas a Kempis.

The motives that led him back to dramatic composition seem to have been as varied as those which induced him to abandon it. Among them may be reckoned the fascination of the career; the success of his young brother Thomas (whose "Timocrate" had had a run, unprecedented for that time, of six months; this was in 1656); the presence of Molière's troupe for several weeks during the Easter holidays of the year 1658, no doubt playing many of the pieces in which the poet had once gained his greatest triumphs; the influence of the Minister of Finance, Foucquet, to whom he was introduced in 1657 and from whom he received a rich gift of money. At all events his third period of dramatic creation began in 1659 with the production of the "Cedipe" and continued for fifteen years. 1660 "La Toison d'or"; 1662 "Sertorius"; 1663 "Sophonisbe"; 1664 "Othon"; 1666 "Agésilas"; 1667 "Attila"; 1670 (in unconscious rivalry with Racine) "Tite et Bérénice"; 1671 (in collaboration with Molière and Quinault) "Psyché" (ballet-comedy); 1672 "Pulchérie"; 1674 "Suréna." This whole series represents on the part of the poet a painful struggle to attain again to that glory that had once been his. But times had changed, society had set up for itself new idols, and the aging poet was unable to repeat the triumphs of other days. Not that these plays were all failures; far from that, and the receipts from some of them which have been preserved show that large audiences often greeted the works of the old master. But the old enthusiasm was gone. Nor was the public taste much at fault. While the old fire bursts forth here and there in great scenes and ringing verses, the general effect is cold, and few plays of the last period *are read or can be read with anything like sustained pleasure.*

In character the poet was, to quote the words of Lanson, "a good citizen of very simple manners, deacon of his parish at Rouen, pious, very simple and devout." Not a good courtier, no diplomat, but in every way a man of sterling worth. Two natures seem combined in him: one the poet of the "Cid," a man of lofty ideals and high-toned romanticism, the other the attorney of waters and forests. Now independent, now seeking out in real humility the mistakes he had committed in his works¹; now asserting his independence as a poet and a creator, now seeking to justify his procedure with what must seem to us the hair-splitting reasoning of some pettifogging attorney. He is, then, the embodiment of the spirit of his time: of the short-sighted, rather superficial view of art on the one hand, — on the other, his work gives the fullest expression to the great and heroic, if sometimes exaggerated, ideals of the first half of the seventeenth century. And so it was that during his greatest period he gained such a hold upon the imagination of the contemporaries who had grown up with him as never could be weakened even by his more brilliant and artistic young rival Racine. "Vive donc notre vieil ami Corneille! Pardonnons-lui de méchants vers, en faveur des divines et sublimes beautés qui nous transportent: ce sont les traits de maître qui sont inimitables." (Lettre de Madame de Sévigné à M^{me} de Grignan, 16 mars 1672.)

THE CID

Corneille found the story of the Cid ready made. Partly historical, partly legendary, the national hero of Spain had already come in Spanish song and story to about the stage of development at

¹ As seen in the *Examens* with which he prefaced each of his dramas in the editions which he issued during the later years of his life, and also his three discourses or essays on the subject of the drama: "Discours des trois unités"; "Discours de l'utilité et des parties du poème dramatique"; "Discours sur la tragédie et sur les moyens de la traiter selon le vraisemblable et le nécessaire."

which he appears in the French drama. As always, the hero of romance differs greatly from the hero of history.

Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar was son of Diego Lainez and Teresa Rodriguez of noble race; he was brought up by his father, a soldier in the castle of Bivar (near Burgos, in Old Castile); he died in 1099. From his youth on he was an enemy and vanquisher of the Moors, hence the greater part of his popularity among the people of Spain. This popularity is the popularity won by the accomplishment of mighty deeds of personal valor, by prodigies of courage; the prestige of results accomplished. History shows him to have been cruel, vindictive, and perfidious, — the vices of a barbarian, — relieved and corrected by the virtues of a barbarian, sudden impulses of generosity and magnanimity. Thanks to these qualities, to his "fierce courage of Achilles combined with the cunning of Ulysses," he won kingdoms for others and for himself. Death overtook him ruling Valencia, with great ambitions still unsatisfied. Chimène survived him five years before she died, driven from the country he had conquered.

In the earliest extant poetic version of his exploits, the "Poema del Cid" (1135-1175), the hero retains in a large measure these rude, barbarian qualities. In the "Romances," or ballads as we should call them (written from the fifteenth century on in ever-increasing numbers), important progress has been made in his transformation. In them he is pictured as the model of barbarian chivalry. He has become the independent vassal of feudalism, the devout Christian who satisfies all his instincts and all his prejudices in his exploits against the Moors; for they were at the same time infidels and his enemies. The two ballads which contain the romantic story of Chimène and Rodrigue read about as follows:

Before the king of Leon one evening Dofia Ximena comes to demand
justice for the death of her father.

•

She asks it against the Cid, Don Rodrigo de Bivar, who made her an orphan while a child of tender years.

"If my request is just or not, O king, well do you know it, for the duties of honor cannot be passed over.

"Every day that dawns I see him who has like a wolf fed upon my blood pass by upon his steed to give me greater sorrow.

"Command him, good king, for well you may, to pass no more along my way, for no man of valor takes vengeance upon a woman.

"If my father gave affront to his, well has he avenged him; and if death has paid the price of honor, let him be content.

"You hold me as your ward; let me not be offended, for what is done to me is done also to your crown."

"Be silent, Dofia Ximena, for you grieve me deeply, and I shall furnish a good remedy for all your troubles.

"The Cid I may not offend, for he is a man of great valor, the defender of my kingdoms, and I desire that he preserve them for me.

"But I will make a pact with him which will work you no ill: he shall give his word to marry you."

Ximena was content with the favor which was shown her: for he who had made her an orphan, the same would be her protector.

Of Ximena and Rodrigo the king took the word and hand to join them in one in the presence of Layn Calvo.

The old enmities were reconciled, for where love presides many wrongs are forgotten.

The betrothed approached, and as he bestowed his hand and gave his kiss, the Cid, looking with confusion upon his bride, said:

"Ximena, I killed thy father, but not in treason; man to man I killed him to avenge a certain wrong.

"A man I killed, a man I give thee; behold me here at thy behest; in the place of a dead father thou hast an honored husband."

And this seemed well to all: they praised his prudent words. And so the marriage of Rodrigo the Castilian was accomplished.

It is at this stage that the story is taken over by Guillen de Castro,¹ from whom Corneille drew practically all his material. But Guillen de Castro lived at a time when Spanish heroism

¹ Guillen de Castro (1569-1631) was a contemporary of Lope de Vega, and himself a noted dramatist. The play which served the French poet was called "*Las Mocedades del Cid*" (composed before 1621).

had lost much of its ancient brutality, and he was himself a man of sentiment and imagination. He added the story of the love between Rodrigo and Ximena. Thus he based his drama upon the most appealing of moral conflicts. Impelled by circumstances over which they have no control, the two lovers are forced to trample upon their feelings in obedience to the implacable vengeance which their sense of personal dignity demands of them. A more tragic situation can hardly be imagined.

Guillen de Castro, however, does not make this the central theme of his drama. His work is rather a series of tableaux representing the hero's deeds of prowess as well as his marriage with Ximena, a sort of dramatized chronicle. These tableaux are indeed set off with a rich display of medieval local color. Scenes of sheer brutality, of tender lyricism, of rude humor, succeed each other in rapid succession. It is interesting, it is full of action and excitement, but in the artistic sense it is hardly a drama at all, for often episodic and detached material thrusts the central characters and what should be the central theme far into the background. It lacked all unity and finish. A drama had to be derived from this incoherent mass of highly dramatic material; this special hero of Spain had to be reduced to the terms of the universally human; and that was the work of Pierre Corneille.

THE THEATER AND AUDIENCE

Let us try to construct in imagination the original *mise en scène* of the "Cid" at the Théâtre du Marais. The stage was very small, probably not over fifteen or twenty feet deep. The auditorium was also very limited. In the gallery, or balcony as we should call it, there was a row of loges occupied by the ladies and their escorts. A few candles in the rear and on the sides cast a dim light over the hall. The stage was lit up by a row of *candles inserted in horizontal pieces of wood so arranged that*

they could be drawn up during the performance and let down between acts to receive the attentions of the candle-snuffers, who had as their sole function this and protection against fire. The musicians (who were very few, often only a couple of violins, a flute, and perhaps a drum) occupied a position to the side. The audience in the parterre were separated from the stage only by a railing made fairly high for the protection of the players. In this parterre the people stood, except on occasions when members of the court deigned to take their places there; then chairs were provided. For the understanding of these details the student could not do better than read carefully the first act of "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Rostand), where the scene is laid in the Hôtel de Bourgogne in the year 1640, or four years after the "Cid." All the essentials as to both the theater and the audience will be found represented there with rare reality and fidelity.

Hence there was a very close relation between the audience and the actors on the stage; the intimacy and sympathy of this relation made much pass that to our age seems like very crude stage practice. There was of course nothing of the modern scene-shifting; the locality was in part suggested by the words of the characters, or left wholly to the imagination of the hearers.

In the early days entrance to the gallery cost generally ten sous, or ten cents in our money (but dimes were not quite so plenty in those days); for the parterre the price was only half as much, or five sous. However, these prices rose gradually till in 1652 they paid as high as a dollar or more for the gallery or loge seats, while the parterre, the people's place, rose to fifteen sous. A placard announcing a play given in 1650 contains this statement:

Venez, apportez votre trogne [phiz, face]
Dedans notre Hôtel de Bourgogne;
Venez en foule, apportez-nous
Dans le parterre quinze sous,
Cent dix sous dans les galeries.

Primitive enough were the devices for attracting the public. They were not beneath processions with drums and trumpets through the streets, much as barn-storming minstrel troupes herald their performances with brass-band processions in our day. "Le théâtre sur lequel se produisait Corneille avait des parades à la porte comme les saltimbanques [mountebanks, clowns] de nos jours." The theatrical folk formed a little republic of their own with officers ranging from the president down to the candle-snuffers.

While the audiences of these days presented a very motley character (cf. first two scenes of "Cyrano de Bergerac"), it was the aristocratic element that made itself felt, and that element alone, as far as any determining influence on the construction of the plays was concerned. Doubtless one must not lay too much stress on words like those put by Corneille into the mouth of the elder Horace as he addresses his son in the play of that name :

Horace, ne crois pas que le peuple stupide
Soit le maître absolu d'un renom bien solide.
Sa voix tumultueuse assez souvent fait bruit,
Mais un moment l'élève, un moment le détruit,
Et ce qu'il contribue à notre renommée
Toujours en moins de rien se dissipe en fumée.
C'est aux rois, c'est aux grands, c'est aux esprits bien faits,
A voir la vertu pleine en ses moindres effets.

But these words are nevertheless entirely typical of the general attitude of the time. And it is these kings, these nobles (*grands*), these minds well fashioned, that constitute in no small degree the proper setting for the "Cid."

And what were the general characteristics of these *esprits bien faits*? As appears from the lines quoted, noble birth was the first requisite. It then followed as a matter of course that these noble beings would be inflamed with a desire to win immortal *glory*; that they would be filled with the most jealous concern

on all points regarding their personal dignity ; and last, but not least, that they would practice the virtues or the accomplishments of knight-errantry toward some fair lady.

To cherish a great ambition to hold one's reputation above everything was the first and highest ideal, in theory at least, of noble lord or lady. So in "Rodogune" Corneille makes Cleopatra exclaim :

J'ai de l'ambition et, soit vice ou vertu,
Mon cœur sous son fardeau veut bien être abattu ;
J'en aime la chaleur, et la nomme sans cesse
La seule passion digne d'une princesse.

And similar illustrations from contemporaneous literature might be multiplied almost indefinitely. The superiority of this ideal over all others, the necessity of sacrificing all to it, finds its finest as well as most typical expression in the famous utterance of Chimène :

Il y va de ma gloire, il faut que je me venge.

Pour conserver ma gloire et finir mon ennui,
Le poursuivre, le perdre et mourir après lui.

It follows of course that, nobles being in theory the only ones who could be guided by these ideals, only such could love each other.

Jason ne fit jamais de communes maîtresses :
Il est né seulement pour charmer des princesses,
Et haïrait l'amour, s'il avait sous sa loi
Rangé de moindres cœurs que des filles de roi. ("Médée.")

And in "Don Sanche d'Aragon" the hero, supposedly of ignoble birth, declares to his princess that should she condescend to love him,

Commençant aussitôt à vous moins estimer,
Je cesserais sans doute aussi de vous aimer.

Closely associated, and depending upon this ideal of self-immortalization, is the ideal of *honneur* or sense of personal

dignity. For surely it would not beseem one who was seeking to win immortal glory to endure any affront which could in any way be considered as inconsistent with the lofty attitude presumed by these haughty aspirations. The way for this philosophy had been well paved by long periods of violence, by life in the camps, by wars abroad, and still more by those at home. The result was the most extreme sensitiveness on all these matters, which degenerated very often into pure swashbucklery. The stories told by contemporaries would in fact suggest that the haughty nobleman of this period went among his fellows with a chip always upon his shoulder.¹

Dueling had long since grown to the proportions of a national evil. In 1607 it was estimated that four thousand nobles had fallen in duels since Henry IV came to the throne in 1589. In 1602 dueling was made a capital offense, but so deep-rooted was the custom that not even the threat of death was sufficient to stamp it out, especially as it was known that the king was privately friendly to it. Decrees tending to eliminate the evil were repeatedly enacted. One in 1609 tried to displace the duel by establishing a court of honor to which every aggrieved person was required to appeal instead of sending a challenge; if the court was unable to make a satisfactory settlement it might permit a duel, but specific and severe penalties were prescribed against killing in unauthorized duels, as well as against acting as second and against giving provocation or sending or accepting a challenge. Others were passed by the Parliament of Paris in 1613, 1617, 1623, 1624, 1625, 1626 (the first decree under which the penalties were enforced), 1634. Richelieu is said

¹ The following anecdote by Tallemant des Réaux may be given as typical. "Conac, gentilhomme saintongeais, plein d'esprit et de cœur, étant un jour au bal, dans la foule fut pressé par le Comte de Montrevel, qui alors était bien jeune. Conac, poussé par derrière, repousse du derrière aussi; Montrevel lui donne un soufflet. Conac, avec le plus grand sang-froid du monde, dit ce vers: 'Pour une moindre injure on passe l'Achéron,' et appelle Montrevel; mais Montrevel le tua."

to have declared to Louis XIII: "Il s'agit de couper la gorge aux duels ou aux édits de Votre Majesté." But, although his efforts corresponded to the spirit of his declaration, he did not succeed in preventing the practice. In 1643 occurred the famous combat between the Comte de Coligny and the Duc de Guise. They met on the Place Royale, in the heart of Paris, in full publicity. Madame de Longueville watched the struggle in secret from a window of a near-by mansion, and saw her favorite defeated. The behavior of these noblemen on this occasion may be taken as typical of the prevailing spirit among the great nobles of the time. "Guise en mettant l'épée à la main, dit à Coligny: Nous allons décider les anciennes querelles de nos deux maisons, et on verra quelle différence il faut mettre entre le sang de Guise et celui de Coligny. Et les deux adversaires en vinrent aux prises. Coligny en portant une fougueuse estocade, glissa et tomba sur le genou. Guise s'empessa de mettre le pied sur son épée, et lui dit: Je ne veux pas vous tuer, mais vous traiter comme vous méritez pour vous être adressé à un prince de ma maison sans vous en avoir sujet. Puis il le frappa du plat de son épée. Coligny se rejeta en arrière, dégagea son épée et la lutte recommença. Mais Guise la termina en lui portant un grand coup dans le bras. Au même moment tombaient les deux seconds, d'Estrades et Bridieux, qui s'étaient enfoncés." (It was a common custom for the seconds actively to espouse the cause of their principals, often sacrificing their lives in quarrels in which they had no personal interest.)

Now when there was no war to absorb the activity of these aristocrats they were forced to turn their attention to other methods of pastime. It being the policy of the government to diminish their power, they could not be employed in the administration of the affairs of the kingdom; and as the acquirement of knowledge and the cultivation of the arts was considered beneath the dignity of these scions of nobility during the first

half of the century at least, dueling and gallantry came to furnish the chief diversion of persons of high degree.¹

To pay homage to some fair lady, to lay one's sword at her feet, to serve her, to be her knight, was the custom — we may say the fad — of the period. It was an old notion descending from the days of chivalry. Dante stated it thus positively :

Love is but one thing with the gentle heart,
As in the saying of the sage we find ;
Thus one from other cannot be apart,
More than the reason from the reasoning mind.

(Norton's translation.)

This conception, though in a less ideal form, grew up in France through close contact with Italian culture. Local conditions shaped it, Spanish influences to some extent intensified it, till it became something very real and as a social tenet something very binding for the noble lords and ladies whom the "Cid" was especially destined to please. That quiver of excitement which, according to Corneille, moved the audience when the unhappy lover presented himself before Chimène was doubtless very real. What may seem to us overdrawn and exaggerated in these or other scenes was not at all so taken in their proper environment — the environment for which they were written. Here they carried all before them, leaving an impression that was not to be forgotten. In after years, when Corneille's star was going into eclipse before the creations of Racine, we find Madame de Sévigné writing to her daughter : " As for the plays of Corneille, be sure that never will anything approach — I do

¹ So Georges de Scudéry declares in the preface to his first drama (1629) that he had burned more fuses than candles, for " La profession que je fais, étant toute pleine de franchise, m'oblige à porter le cœur sur les lèvres et à t'avertir que dans la musique des sciences je ne chante que par nature." And in the little treatise " L'Honnête Homme ou l'Art de plaire à la cour," we find this statement : " Il est certain que le nombre n'est pas petit dans la cour de ces esprits malfaits qui, par un sentiment de stupidité brutale, ne peuvent se figurer qu'un gentilhomme puisse être savant et soldat ensemble."

not say surpass — the beautiful passages in Corneille. . . . In the plays of Racine there are, to be sure, agreeable things, but nothing perfectly beautiful, nothing which takes you by storm, none of those tirades of Corneille which thrill you. *Je suis folle de Corneille.*”

The student or reader who does not hold these facts and conditions in mind as he studies or reads ; who cannot in imagination enter the dimly-lighted little auditorium of the Théâtre du Marais and see the boxes with noble lords and ladies superb in haughtiness and their high insignia, upon the stage the benches where sit the gentlemen wearing on their breasts the crosses of the knightly orders, the niches where the pages sit for other plays occupied at the representations of the “*Cid*” (so Mondory tells his friend Balzac) by those of noble rank, and all of them responsive to these sentiments of lofty chivalry ; who cannot hear, finally, the rich music of these sonorous verses, — should leave this drama unstudied and unread. He will miss much of its beauty ; more still of its meaning and significance. For, as Sainte-Beuve so well expresses it : “To appreciate the ‘*Cid*’ we must become in some sort its contemporary. The ‘*Cid*’ is a creation of youth ; a great beginning — the beginning of a man, the rebeginning of a poetry, the overture to a great century. Full of majestic and melodious verses, it is in truth magnificent and inspiring. The young man who could not admire the ‘*Cid*’ would be indeed unfortunate ; devoid of passion, the highest joy of youth would not be his. Love and honor in the ‘*Cid*’ form a flower immortal.” And not only “a flower immortal,” but a force forming the ideals of a nation. It was this that made Napoleon the admirer of our poet : “Tragedy stirs the soul, elevates the heart ; it may, and ought to, create heroes. That is why France owes to Corneille a part of its noble deeds. Hence, were he alive, I would make him a prince.”

LE CID, TRAGÉDIE

ACTEURS

DON FERNAND, premier roi de Castille
DONA URRAQUE, infante de Castille
DON DIÈGUE, père de don Rodrigue
DON GOMÈS, comte de Gormas, père de Chimène
DON RODRIGUE, amant de Chimène
DON SANCHE, amoureux de Chimène
DON ARIAS, } gentilshommes castillans
DON ALONSE, }
CHIMÈNE, fille de don Gomès
LÉONOR, gouvernante de l'Infante
ELVIRE, gouvernante de Chimène
UN PAGE de l'Infante

La scène est à Séville .

LE CID

ACTE I

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE

CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

CHIMÈNE

Elvire, m'as-tu fait un rapport bien sincère ?
Ne déguises-tu rien de ce qu'a dit mon père ?

ELVIRE

Tous mes sens à moi-même en sont encor charmés :
Il estime Rodrigue autant que vous l'aimez,
Et si je ne m'abuse à lire dans son âme, 5
Il vous commandera de répondre à sa flamme.

CHIMÈNE

Dis-moi donc, je te prie, une seconde fois
Ce qui te fait juger qu'il approuve mon choix :
Apprends-moi de nouveau quel espoir j'en dois prendre ;
Un si charmant discours ne se peut trop entendre ; 10
Tu ne peux trop promettre aux feux de notre amour
La douce liberté de se montrer au jour.
Que t'a-t-il répondu sur la secrète brigue
Que font auprès de toi don Sanche et don Rodrigue ?
N'as-tu point trop fait voir quelle inégalité 15
Entre ces deux amants me penche d'un côté ?

ELVIRE

Non ; j'ai peint votre cœur dans une indifférence
Qui n'enfle d'aucun d'eux ni détruit l'espérance,
Et sans les voir d'un œil trop sévère ou trop doux,
Attend l'ordre d'un père à choisir un époux. 20

Ce respect l'a ravi, sa bouche et son visage
M'en ont donné sur l'heure un digne témoignage,
Et puisqu'il vous en faut encor faire un récit,
Voici d'eux et de vous ce qu'en hâte il m'a dit :
« Elle est dans le devoir ; tous deux sont dignes d'elle, 25
Tous deux formés d'un sang noble, vaillant, fidèle,
Jeunes, mais qui font lire aisément dans leurs yeux
L'éclatante vertu de leurs braves aïeux.

Don Rodrigue surtout n'a trait en son visage
Qui d'un homme de cœur ne soit la haute image, 30
Et sort d'une maison si féconde en guerriers,
Qu'ils y prennent naissance au milieu des lauriers.
La valeur de son père, en son temps sans pareille,
Tant qu'a duré sa force, a passé pour merveille ;
Ses rides sur son front ont gravé ses exploits, 35
Et nous disent encor ce qu'il fut autrefois.

Je me promets du fils ce que j'ai vu du père ;
Et ma fille, en un mot, peut l'aimer et me plaire. »

Il allait au conseil, dont l'heure qui pressait
A tranché ce discours qu'à peine il commençait ; 40
Mais à ce peu de mots je crois que sa pensée
Entre vos deux amants n'est pas fort balancée.
Le roi doit à son fils élire un gouverneur,
Et c'est lui que regarde un tel degré d'honneur :
Ce choix n'est pas douteux, et sa rare vaillance 45
Ne peut souffrir qu'on craigne aucune concurrence.
Comme ses hauts exploits le rendent sans égal,
Dans un espoir si juste il sera sans rival ;

ACTE I, SCÈNE II

5

Et puisque don Rodrigue a résolu son père
Au sortir du conseil à proposer l'affaire,
Je vous laisse à juger s'il prendra bien son temps,
Et si tous vos désirs seront bientôt contents.

50

CHIMÈNE

Il semble toutefois que mon âme troublée
Refuse cette joie, et s'en trouve accablée :
Un moment donne au sort des visages divers,
Et dans ce grand bonheur je crains un grand revers.

55

ELVIRE

Vous verrez cette crainte heureusement déçue.

CHIMÈNE

Allons, quoi qu'il en soit, en attendre l'issue.

SCÈNE II

L'INFANTE, LÉONOR, PAGE

L'INFANTE

Page, allez avertir Chimène de ma part
Qu'aujourd'hui pour me voir elle attend un peu tard,
Et que mon amitié se plaint de sa paresse.

60

(Le page rentre)

LÉONOR

Madame, chaque jour même désir vous presse ;
Et dans son entretien je vous vois chaque jour
Demander en quel point se trouve son amour.

L'INFANTE

Ce n'est pas sans sujet : je l'ai presque forcée
A recevoir les traits dont son âme est blessée.

65

Elle aime don Rodrigue, et le tient de ma main,
 Et par moi don Rodrigue a vaincu son dédain :
 Ainsi de ces amants ayant formé les chaînes,
 Je dois prendre intérêt à voir finir leurs peines. 70

LÉONOR

Madame, toutefois parmi leurs bons succès
 Vous montrez un chagrin qui va jusqu'à l'excès.
 Cet amour, qui tous deux les comble d'allégresse,
 Fait-il de ce grand cœur la profonde tristesse,
 Et ce grand intérêt que vous prenez pour eux 75
 Vous rend-il malheureuse alors qu'ils sont heureux ?
 Mais je vais trop avant, et deviens indiscrete.

L'INFANTE

Ma tristesse redouble à la tenir secrète.
 Écoute, écoute enfin comme j'ai combattu,
 Écoute quels assauts brave encor ma vertu. 80
 L'amour est un tyran qui n'épargne personne :
 Ce jeune cavalier, cet amant que je donne,
 Je l'aime.

LÉONOR

Vous l'aimez !

L'INFANTE

Mets la main sur mon cœur,
 Et vois comme il se trouble au nom de son vainqueur,
 Comme il le reconnaît.

LÉONOR

Pardonnez-moi, Madame, 85
 Si je sors du respect pour blâmer cette flamme.
 Une grande princesse à ce point s'oublier
Que d'admettre en son cœur un simple cavalier !

Et que dirait le roi ? que dirait la Castille ?
 Vous souvient-il encor de qui vous êtes fille ?

90

L'INFANTE

Il m'en souvient si bien que j'épandrai mon sang
 Avant que je m'abaisse à démentir mon rang.
 Je te répondrais bien que dans les belles âmes
 Le seul mérite a droit de produire des flammes ;
 Et si ma passion cherchait à s'excuser, 95
 Mille exemples fameux pourraient l'autoriser ;
 Mais je n'en veux point suivre où ma gloire s'engage ;
 La surprise des sens n'abat point mon courage ;
Et je me dis toujours qu'étant fille de roi,
Tout autre qu'un monarque est indigne de moi. 100
 Quand je vis que mon cœur ne se pouvait défendre,
 Moi-même je donnai ce que je n'osais prendre.
 Je mis, au lieu de moi, Chimène en ses liens,
 Et j'allumai leurs feux pour éteindre les miens.
 Ne t'étonne donc plus si mon âme gênée 105
 Avec impatience attend leur hyménée :
 Tu vois que mon repos en dépend aujourd'hui.
 Si l'amour vit d'espoir, il périt avec lui :
 C'est un feu qui s'éteint, faute de nourriture ;
 Et malgré la rigueur de ma triste aventure, 110
 Si Chimène a jamais Rodrigue pour mari,
 Mon espérance est morte, et mon esprit guéri.
 Je souffre cependant un tourment incroyable :
 Jusques à cet hymen Rodrigue m'est aimable ;
 Je travaille à le perdre, et le perds à regret ; 115
 Et de là prend son cours mon déplaisir secret.
 Je vois avec chagrin que l'amour me contraigne
 A pousser des soupirs pour ce que je dédaigne ;
 Je sens en deux partis mon esprit divisé :

Si mon courage est haut, mon cœur est embrasé ; 120
 Cet hymen m'est fatal, je le crains et souhaite :
 Je n'ose en espérer qu'une joie imparfaite.
Ma gloire et mon amour ont pour moi tant d'appas,
 Que je meurs s'il s'achève ou ne s'achève pas.

LÉONOR

Madame, après cela je n'ai rien à vous dire, 125
 Sinon que de vos maux avec vous je soupire :
 Je vous blâmais tantôt, je vous plains à présent ;
 Mais puisque dans un mal si doux et si cuisant
 Votre vertu combat et son charme et sa force,
 En repousse l'assaut, en rejette l'amorce, 130
 Elle rendra le calme à vos esprits flottants.
 Espérez donc tout d'elle, et du secours du temps ;
 Espérez tout du ciel ; il a trop de justice
 Pour laisser la vertu dans un si long supplice.

L'INFANTE

Ma plus douce espérance est de perdre l'espoir. 135

LE PAGE

Par vos commandements Chimène vous vient voir.

L'INFANTE à Léonor

Allez l'entretenir en cette galerie.

LÉONOR

Voulez-vous demeurer dedans la rêverie ?

L'INFANTE

Non, je veux seulement, malgré mon déplaisir,
 Remettre mon visage un peu plus à loisir. 140
 Je vous suis.

Juste ciel, d'où j'attends mon remède,

Mets enfin quelque borne au mal qui me possède :
 Assure mon repos, assure mon honneur.
 Dans le bonheur d'autrui je cherche mon bonheur :
 Cet hyménée à trois également importe ; 145
 Rends son effet plus prompt, ou mon âme plus forte.
 D'un lien conjugal joindre ces deux amants,
 C'est briser tous mes fers, et finir mes tourments.
 Mais je tarde un peu trop : allons trouver Chimène,
 Et par son entretien soulager notre peine. 150

SCÈNE III

LE COMTE, DON DIÈGUE

LE COMTE

Enfin vous l'emportez, et la faveur du roi
 Vous élève en un rang qui n'était dû qu'à moi :
 Il vous fait gouverneur du prince de Castille.

DON DIÈGUE

Cette marque d'honneur qu'il met dans ma famille
 Montre à tous qu'il est juste, et fait connaître assez 155
 Qu'il sait récompenser les services passés.

LE COMTE

Pour grands que soient les rois, ils sont ce que nous sommes :
 Ils peuvent se tromper comme les autres hommes ;
 Et ce choix sert de preuve à tous les courtisans
 Qu'ils savent mal payer les services présents. 160

DON DIÈGUE

Ne parlons plus d'un choix dont votre esprit s'irrite :
La faveur l'a pu faire autant que le mérite ;
 Mais on doit ce respect au pouvoir absolu,
 De n'examiner rien quand un roi l'a voulu.

A l'honneur qu'il m'a fait ajoutez-en un autre ; 165
 Joignons d'un sacré nœud ma maison à la vôtre :
 Vous n'avez qu'une fille, et moi je n'ai qu'un fils ;
 Leur hymen nous peut rendre à jamais plus qu'amis :
 Faites-nous cette grâce, et l'acceptez pour gendre.

LE COMTE

A des partis plus hauts ce beau fils doit prétendre ; 170
 Et le nouvel éclat de votre dignité
 Lui doit enfler le cœur d'une autre vanité.

Exercez-la, Monsieur, et gouvernez le prince :
 Montrez-lui comme il faut régir une province,
 Faire trembler partout les peuples sous sa loi, 175
 Remplir les bons d'amour, et les méchants d'effroi.
 Joignez à ces vertus celles d'un capitaine :
 Montrez-lui comme il faut s'endurcir à la peine ;
 Dans le métier de Mars se rendre sans égal,
 Passer les jours entiers et les nuits à cheval, 180
 Reposer tout armé, forcer une muraille,
 Et ne devoir qu'à soi le gain d'une bataille.
 Instruisez-le d'exemple, et rendez-le parfait,
 Expliquant à ses yeux vos leçons par l'effet.

DON DIÈGUE

Pour s'instruire d'exemple, en dépit de l'envie, 185
 Il lira seulement l'histoire de ma vie.
 Là, dans un long tissu de belles actions,
 Il verra comme il faut dompter des nations,
 Attaquer une place, ordonner une armée,
 Et sur de grands exploits bâtir sa renommée. 190

LE COMTE

Les exemples vivants sont d'un autre pouvoir ;
Un prince dans un livre apprend mal son devoir.

Et qu'a fait après tout ce grand nombre d'années
 Que ne puisse égaler une de mes journées ?
 Si vous fûtes vaillant, je le suis aujourd'hui, 195
 Et ce bras du royaume est le plus ferme appui.
 Grenade et l'Aragon tremblent quand ce fer brille ;
 Mon nom sert de rempart à toute la Castille :
 Sans moi, vous passeriez bientôt sous d'autres lois,
 Et vous auriez bientôt vos ennemis pour rois. 200
 Chaque jour, chaque instant, pour rehausser ma gloire,
 Met lauriers sur lauriers, victoire sur victoire.
 Le prince à mes côtés ferait dans les combats
 L'essai de son courage à l'ombre de mon bras ;
 Il apprendrait à vaincre en me regardant faire ; 205
 Et pour répondre en hâte à son grand caractère,
 Il verrait . . .

DON DIÈGUE

Je le sais, vous servez bien le roi :
 Je vous ai vu combattre et commander sous moi.
 Quand l'âge dans mes nerfs a fait couler sa glace,
 Votre rare valeur a bien rempli ma place ; 210
 Enfin, pour épargner des discours superflus,
 Vous êtes aujourd'hui ce qu'autrefois je fus.
 Vous voyez toutefois qu'en cette concurrence
 Un monarque entre nous met quelque différence.

LE COMTE

Ce que je méritais, vous l'avez emporté. 21

DON DIÈGUE

Qui l'a gagné sur vous l'avait mieux mérité.

LE COMTE

Qui peut mieux l'exercer en est bien le plus digne.

DON DIÈGUE

En être refusé n'en est pas un bon signe.

LE COMTE

Vous l'avez eu par brigue, étant vieux courtisan.

DON DIÈGUE

L'éclat de mes hauts faits fut mon seul partisan.

220

LE COMTE

Parlons-en mieux, le roi fait honneur à votre âge.

DON DIÈGUE

Le roi, quand il en fait, le mesure au courage.

LE COMTE

Et par là cet honneur n'était dû qu'à mon bras.

DON DIÈGUE

Qui n'a pu l'obtenir ne le méritait pas.

LE COMTE

Ne le méritait pas ! Moi ?

DON DIÈGUE

Vous.

LE COMTE

Ton impudence,

225

Téméraire vieillard, aura sa récompense.

(Il lui donne un soufflet.)

DON DIÈGUE, mettant l'épée à la main

Achève, et prends ma vie après un tel affront,
Le premier dont ma race ait vu rougir son front.

ACTE I, SCÈNE IV

13

LE COMTE

Et que penses-tu faire avec tant de faiblesse ?

DON DIÈGUE

O Dieu ! ma force usée en ce besoin me laisse !

230

LE COMTE

Ton épée est à moi ; mais tu serais trop vain,
Si ce honteux trophée avait chargé ma main.

Adieu : fais lire au prince, en dépit de l'envie,
Pour son instruction, l'histoire de ta vie :
D'un insolent discours ce juste châtiment
Ne lui servira pas d'un petit ornement.

235

SCÈNE IV

DON DIÈGUE

O rage ! ô désespoir ! ô vieillesse ennemie !
N'ai-je donc tant vécu que pour cette infamie ?
Et ne suis-je blanchi dans les travaux guerriers
Que pour voir en un jour flétrir tant de lauriers ?
Mon bras, qu'avec respect toute l'Espagne admire,
Mon bras, qui tant de fois a sauvé cet empire,
Tant de fois affermi le trône de son roi,
Trahit donc ma querelle, et ne fait rien pour moi ?
O cruel souvenir de ma gloire passée !
Œuvre de tant de jours en un jour effacée !
Nouvelle dignité, fatale à mon bonheur !
Précipice élevé d'où tombe mon honneur !
Faut-il de votre éclat voir triompher le comte,
Et mourir sans vengeance, ou vivre dans la honte ?
Comte, sois de mon prince à présent gouverneur !

240

245

250

Ce haut rang n'admet point un homme sans honneur ;
Et ton jaloux orgueil, par cet affront insigne,
Malgré le choix du roi, m'en a su rendre indigne.
Et toi, de mes exploits glorieux instrument, 255
Mais d'un corps tout de glace inutile ornement,
Fer, jadis tant à craindre, et qui, dans cette offense,
M'as servi de parade, et non pas de défense,
Va, quitte désormais le dernier des humains,
Passe, pour me venger, en de meilleures mains. 260

SCÈNE V

DON DIÈGUE, DON RODRIGUE

DON DIÈGUE

Rodrigue, as-tu du cœur ?

DON RODRIGUE

Tout autre que mon père
L'éprouverait sur l'heure.

DON DIÈGUE

Agréable colère !
Digne ressentiment à ma douleur bien doux !
Je reconnais mon sang à ce noble courroux ;
Ma jeunesse revit en cette ardeur si prompte. 265
Viens, mon fils, viens, mon sang, viens réparer ma honte ;
Viens me venger.

DON RODRIGUE

De quoi ?

DON DIÈGUE

D'un affront si cruel,
Qu'à l'honneur de tous deux il porte un coup mortel :

D'un soufflet. L'insolent en eût perdu la vie ;
 Mais mon âge a trompé ma généreuse envie : 270
 Et ce fer que mon bras ne peut plus soutenir,
 Je le remets au tien pour venger et punir.

Va contre un arrogant éprouver ton courage :
Ce n'est que dans le sang qu'on lave un tel outrage ;
 Meurs ou tue. Au surplus, pour ne te point flatter, 275
 Je te donne à combattre un homme à redouter :
 Je l'ai vu, tout couvert de sang et de poussière,
 Porter partout l'effroi dans une armée entière.
 J'ai vu par sa valeur cent escadrons rompus ;
 Et pour t'en dire encor quelque chose de plus, 280
 Plus que brave soldat, plus que grand capitaine,
 C'est . . .

DON RODRIGUE

De grâce, achevez.

DON DIÈGUE

Le père de Chimène.

DON RODRIGUE

Le . . .

DON DIÈGUE

Ne réplique point, je connais ton amour ;
Mais qui peut vivre infâme est indigne du jour.
 Plus l'offenseur est cher, et plus grande est l'offense. 285
 Enfin tu sais l'affront, et tu tiens la vengeance :
 Je ne te dis plus rien. Venge-moi, venge-toi ;
 Montre-toi digne fils d'un père tel que moi.
 Accablé des malheurs où le destin me range,
 Je vais les déplorer : va, cours, vole, et nous venge. 290

SCÈNE VI

DON RODRIGUE

Percé jusques au fond du cœur
 D'une atteinte imprévue aussi bien que mortelle,
 Misérable vengeur d'une juste querelle,
 Et malheureux objet d'une injuste rigueur,
 Je demeure immobile, et mon âme abattue 295

Cède au coup qui me tue.
 Si près de voir mon feu récompensé,
 O Dieu, l'étrange peine!
 En cet affront mon père est l'offensé,
 Et l'offenseur le père de Chimène ! 300

Que je sens de rudes combats !
 Contre mon propre honneur mon amour s'intéresse :
 Il faut venger un père, et perdre une maîtresse :
 L'un m'anime le cœur, l'autre retient mon bras.
 Réduit au triste choix ou de trahir ma flamme, 305
 Ou de vivre en infâme,
 Des deux côtés mon mal est infini.

O Dieu, l'étrange peine !
 Faut-il laisser un affront impuni ?
 Faut-il punir le père de Chimène ? 310

Père, maîtresse, honneur, amour,
 Noble et dure contrainte, aimable tyrannie,
 Tous mes plaisirs sont morts, ou ma gloire ternie.
 L'un me rend malheureux, l'autre indigne du jour.
 Cher et cruel espoir d'une âme généreuse, 315

Mais ensemble amoureuse,
 Digne ennemi de mon plus grand bonheur,
Fer qui causes ma peine,

M'es-tu donné pour venger mon honneur ?

M'es-tu donné pour perdre ma Chimène ?

320

Il vaut mieux courir au trépas.

Je dois à ma maîtresse aussi bien qu'à mon père :

J'attire en me vengeant sa haine et sa colère ;

J'attire ses mépris en ne me vengeant pas.

A mon plus doux espoir l'un me rend infidèle,

325

Et l'autre indigne d'elle.

Mon mal augmente à le vouloir guérir ;

Tout redouble ma peine.

Allons, mon âme ; et puisqu'il faut mourir,

Mourons du moins sans offenser Chimène.

330

Mourir sans tirer ma raison !

Rechercher un trépas si mortel à ma gloire !

Endurer que l'Espagne impute à ma mémoire

D'avoir mal soutenu l'honneur de ma maison !

Respecter un amour dont mon âme égarée

335

Voit la perte assurée !

N'écoutons plus ce penser suborneur,

Qui ne sert qu'à ma peine.

Allons, mon bras, sauvons du moins l'honneur,

Puisqu'après tout il faut perdre Chimène.

340

Oui, mon esprit s'était déçu.

Je dois tout à mon père avant qu'à ma maîtresse :

Que je meure au combat, ou meure de tristesse,

Je rendrai mon sang pur comme je l'ai reçu.

Je m'accuse déjà de trop de négligence :

345

Courons à la vengeance ;

Et tout honteux d'avoir tant balancé,

Ne soyons plus en peine,

Puisqu'aujourd'hui mon père est l'offensé,

Si l'offenseur est père de Chimène.

350

ACTE II

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE

DON ARIAS, LE COMTE

LE COMTE

Je l'avoue entre nous, mon sang un peu trop chaud
S'est trop ému d'un mot, et l'a porté trop haut ;
Mais puisque c'en est fait, le coup est sans remède.

DON ARIAS

Qu'aux volontés du roi ce grand courage cède :
Il y prend grande part, et son cœur irrité 355
Agira contre vous de pleine autorité.
Aussi vous n'avez point de valable défense :
Le rang de l'offensé, la grandeur de l'offense,
Demandent des devoirs, et des soumissions
Qui passent le commun des satisfactions. 360

LE COMTE

Le roi peut à son gré disposer de ma vie.

DON ARIAS

De trop d'empportement votre faute est suivie.
Le roi vous aime encore ; apaisez son courroux.
Il a dit : « Je le veux ; » désobéirez-vous ?

LE COMTE

Monsieur, pour conserver tout ce que j'ai d'estime, 365
Désobéir un peu n'est pas un si grand crime ;

Et quelque grand qu'il soit, mes services présents
Pour le faire abolir sont plus que suffisants.

DON ARIAS

Quoi qu'on fasse d'illustre et de considérable,
Jamais à son sujet un roi n'est redevable. 370
Vous vous flattez beaucoup, et vous devez savoir
Que qui sert bien son roi ne fait que son devoir.
Vous vous perdrez, Monsieur, sur cette confiance.

LE COMTE

Je ne vous en croirai qu'après l'expérience.

DON ARIAS

Vous devez redouter la puissance d'un roi. 375

LE COMTE

Un jour seul ne perd pas un homme tel que moi.
Que toute sa grandeur s'arme pour mon supplice,
Tout l'État périra, s'il faut que je périsse.

DON ARIAS

Quoi ! vous craignez si peu le pouvoir souverain . . .

LE COMTE

D'un sceptre qui sans moi tomberait de sa main. 380
Il a trop d'intérêt lui-même en ma personne,
Et ma tête en tombant ferait choir sa couronne.

DON ARIAS

Souffrez que la raison remette vos esprits.
Prenez un bon conseil.

LE COMTE

Le conseil en est pris.

DON ARIAS

Que lui dirai-je enfin ? je lui dois rendre compte. 385

LE COMTE

Que je ne puis du tout consentir à ma honte.

DON ARIAS

Mais songez que les rois veulent être absolus.

LE COMTE

Le sort en est jeté, Monsieur, n'en parlons plus.

DON ARIAS

Adieu donc, puisqu'en vain je tâche à vous résoudre :
Avec tous vos lauriers, craignez encor le foudre. 390

LE COMTE

Je l'attendrai sans peur.

DON ARIAS

Mais non pas sans effet.

LE COMTE

Nous verrons donc par là don Diègue satisfait.

(Il est seul)

Qui ne craint point la mort ne craint point les menaces.
J'ai le cœur au-dessus des plus fières disgrâces ;
Et l'on peut me réduire à vivre sans bonheur, 395
Mais non pas me résoudre à vivre sans honneur.

SCÈNE II

LE COMTE, DON RODRIGUE

DON RODRIGUE

, comte, deux mots.

LE COMTE

Parle.

DON RODRIGUE

Ote-moi d'un doute.

is-tu bien don Diègue ?

LE COMTE

Oui.

DON RODRIGUE

Parlons bas ; écoute.

que ce vieillard fut la même vertu,
llance et l'honneur de son temps ? le sais-tu ?

400

LE COMTE

tre.

DON RODRIGUE

Cette ardeur que dans les yeux je porte,
que c'est son sang ? le sais-tu ?

LE COMTE

Que m'importe ?

DON RODRIGUE

re pas d'ici je te le fais savoir.

LE COMTE

présomptueux !

DON RODRIGUE

Parle sans t'émouvoir.

Je suis jeune, il est vrai ; mais aux âmes bien nées
La valeur n'attend pas le nombre des années.

405

LE COMTE

Te mesurer à moi ! Qui t'a rendu si vain,
 Toi qu'on n'a jamais vu les armes à la main ?

DON RODRIGUE

Mes pareils à deux fois ne se font point connaître,
 Et pour leurs coups d'essai veulent des coups de maître.

410

LE COMTE

Sais-tu bien qui je suis ?

DON RODRIGUE

Oui ; tout autre que moi

Au seul bruit de ton nom pourrait trembler d'effroi.
 Les palmes dont je vois ta tête si couverte
 Semblent porter écrit le destin de ma perte.
 J'attaque en téméraire un bras toujours vainqueur ;
 Mais j'aurai trop de force, ayant assez de cœur.
 A qui venge son père il n'est rien impossible.
Ton bras est invaincu, mais non pas invincible.

415

LE COMTE

Ce grand cœur qui paraît aux discours que tu tiens,
 Par tes yeux, chaque jour, se découvrait aux miens ;
 Et croyant voir en toi l'honneur de la Castille,
 Mon âme avec plaisir te destinait ma fille.
 Je sais ta passion, et suis ravi de voir
 Que tous ses mouvements cèdent à ton devoir ;
Qu'ils n'ont point affaibli cette ardeur magnanime ;

420

425

ta haute vertu répond à mon estime ;
 ue voulant pour gendre un cavalier parfait,
 e me trompais point au choix que j'avais fait ;
 s je sens que pour toi ma pitié s'intéresse ;
 mire ton courage, et je plains ta jeunesse. 430
 cherche point à faire un coup d'essai fatal ;
 ense ma valeur d'un combat inégal ;
 o peu d'honneur pour moi suivrait cette victoire :
uncre sans péril, on triomphe sans gloire.
 te croirait toujours abattu sans effort ; 435
 'aurais seulement le regret de ta mort.

DON RODRIGUE

ie indigne pitié ton audace est suivie :
 m'ose ôter l'honneur craint de m'ôter la vie !

LE COMTE

re-toi d'ici.

DON RODRIGUE

Marchons sans discourir.

LE COMTE

1 si las de vivre ?

DON RODRIGUE

As-tu peur de mourir ? 440

LE COMTE

s, tu fais ton devoir, et le fils dégenère
 survit un moment à l'honneur de son père.

SCÈNE III

L'INFANTE, CHIMÈNE, LÉONOR

L'INFANTE

Apaise, ma Chimène, apaise ta douleur :
 Fais agir ta constance en ce coup de malheur.
 Tu reverras le calme après ce faible orage ; 445
 Ton bonheur n'est couvert que d'un peu de nuage,
 Et tu n'as rien perdu pour le voir différer.

CHIMÈNE

Mon cœur outré d'ennuis n'ose rien espérer.
 Un orage si prompt qui trouble une bonace
 D'un naufrage certain nous porte la menace : 450
 Je n'en saurais douter, je pérís dans le port.
 J'aimais, j'étais aimée, et nos pères d'accord ;
 Et je vous en contais la charmante nouvelle,
 Au malheureux moment que naissait leur querelle,
 Dont le récit fatal, sitôt qu'on vous l'a fait, 455
 D'une si douce attente a ruiné l'effet.

Maudite ambition, détestable manie,
 Dont les plus généreux souffrent la tyrannie !
 Honneur impitoyable à mes plus chers désirs,
 Que tu me vas coûter de pleurs et de soupirs ! 460

L'INFANTE

Tu n'as dans leur querelle aucun sujet de craindre :
 Un moment l'a fait naître, un moment va l'éteindre.
 Elle a fait trop de bruit pour ne pas s'accorder,
 Puisque déjà le roi les veut accommoder ;
 Et tu sais que mon âme, à tes ennuis sensible, 465
Pour en tarir la source y fera l'impossible.

CHIMÈNE

Les accommodements ne font rien en ce point.
 De si mortels affronts ne se réparent point.
 En vain on fait agir la force ou la prudence :
 Si l'on guérit le mal, ce n'est qu'en apparence. 470
 La haine que les cœurs conservent au dedans
 Nourrit des feux cachés, mais d'autant plus ardents.

L'INFANTE

Le saint nœud qui joindra don Rodrigue et Chimène
 Des pères ennemis dissipera la haine ;
 Et nous verrons bientôt votre amour le plus fort 475
 Par un heureux hymen étouffer ce discord.

CHIMÈNE

Je le souhaite ainsi plus que je ne l'espère :
 Don Diègue est trop altier, et je connais mon père.
 Je sens couler des pleurs que je veux retenir ;
 Le passé me tourmente, et je crains l'avenir. 480

L'INFANTE

Que crains-tu ? d'un vieillard l'impuissante faiblesse ?

CHIMÈNE

Rodrigue a du courage.

L'INFANTE

Il a trop de jeunesse.

CHIMÈNE

Les hommes valeureux le sont du premier coup.

L'INFANTE

Tu ne dois pas pourtant le redouter beaucoup :
 Il est trop amoureux pour te vouloir déplaire, 485
 Et deux mots de ta bouche arrêtent sa colère.

CHIMÈNE

S'il ne m'obéit point, quel comble à mon ennui !
 Et s'il peut m'obéir, que dira-t-on de lui ?
 Étant né ce qu'il est, souffrir un tel outrage !
 Soit qu'il cède ou résiste au feu qui me l'engage, 490
 Mon esprit ne peut qu'être ou honteux ou confus,
 De son trop de respect, ou d'un juste refus.

L'INFANTE

Chimène a l'âme haute, et quoiqu'intéressée,
 Elle ne peut souffrir une basse pensée ;
 Mais si jusques au jour de l'accommodement 495
 Je fais mon prisonnier de ce parfait amant,
 Et que j'empêche ainsi l'effet de son courage,
 Ton esprit amoureux n'aura-t-il point d'ombrage ?

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! Madame, en ce cas je n'ai plus de souci.

SCÈNE IV

L'INFANTE, CHIMÈNE, LÉONOR, LE PAGE

L'INFANTE

Page, cherchez Rodrigue, et l'amenez ici. 500

LE PAGE

Le comte de Gormas et lui . . .

CHIMÈNE

Bon Dieu ! je tremble.

ACTE II, SCÈNE V

27

L'INFANTE

Parlez.

LE PAGE

De ce palais ils sont sortis ensemble.

CHIMÈNE

Seuls ?

LE PAGE

Seuls, et qui semblaient tout bas se quereller.

CHIMÈNE

Sans doute ils sont aux mains, il n'en faut plus parler.
Madame, pardonnez à cette promptitude.

505

SCÈNE V

L'INFANTE, LÉONOR

L'INFANTE

Hélas ! que dans l'esprit je sens d'inquiétude !
Je pleure ses malheurs, son amant me ravit ;
Mon repos m'abandonne, et ma flamme revit.
Ce qui va séparer Rodrigue de Chimène
Fait renaître à la fois mon espoir et ma peine ;
Et leur division, que je vois à regret,
Dans mon esprit charmé jette un plaisir secret.

510

LÉONOR

Cette haute vertu qui règne dans votre âme
Se rend-elle sitôt à cette lâche flamme ?

L'INFANTE

Ne la nomme point lâche, à présent que chez moi
 Pompeuse et triomphante elle me fait la loi :
 Porte-lui du respect, puisqu'elle m'est si chère.
 Ma vertu la combat, mais malgré moi j'espère ;
 Et d'un si fol espoir mon cœur mal défendu
 Vole après un amant que Chimène a perdu.

515

520

LÉONOR

Vous laissez choir ainsi ce glorieux courage,
 Et la raison chez vous perd ainsi son usage ?

L'INFANTE

Ah ! qu'avec peu d'effet on entend la raison,
 Quand le cœur est atteint d'un si charmant poison !
 Et lorsque le malade aime sa maladie,
 Qu'il a peine à souffrir que l'on y remédie !

525

LÉONOR

Votre espoir vous séduit, votre mal vous est doux ;
 Mais enfin ce Rodrigue est indigne de vous.

L'INFANTE

Je ne le sais que trop ; mais si ma vertu cède,
 Apprends comme l'amour flatte un cœur qu'il possède.
 Si Rodrigue une fois sort vainqueur du combat,
 Si dessous sa valeur ce grand guerrier s'abat,
 Je puis en faire cas, je puis l'aimer sans honte.
 Que ne fera-t-il point, s'il peut vaincre le comte ?
 J'ose m'imaginer qu'à ses moindres exploits
 Les royaumes entiers tomberont sous ses lois ;
 Et mon amour flatteur déjà me persuade
 Que je le vois assis au trône de Grenade,
Les Mores subjugués trembler en l'adorant,

530

535

ACTE II, SCÈNE VI

29

L'Aragon recevoir ce nouveau conquérant,
Le Portugal se rendre, et ses nobles journées
Porter delà les mers ses hautes destinées,
Du sang des Africains arroser ses lauriers :
Enfin tout ce qu'on dit des plus fameux guerriers,
Je l'attends de Rodrigue après cette victoire,
Et fais de son amour un sujet de ma gloire.

540

545

LÉONOR

Mais, Madame, voyez où vous portez son bras,
Ensuite d'un combat qui peut-être n'est pas.

L'INFANTE

Rodrigue est offensé ; le comte a fait l'outrage ;
Ils sont sortis ensemble : en faut-il davantage ?

550

LÉONOR

Eh bien ! ils se battront, puisque vous le voulez ;
Mais Rodrigue ira-t-il si loin que vous allez ?

L'INFANTE

Que veux-tu ? je suis folle, et mon esprit s'égare :
Tu vois par là quels maux cet amour me prépare.
Viens dans mon cabinet consoler mes ennuis,
Et ne me quitte point dans le trouble où je suis.

555

SCÈNE VI

DON FERNAND, DON ARIAS, DON SANCHE

DON FERNAND

Le comte est donc si vain et si peu raisonnable !
Ose-t-il croire encor son crime pardonnable ?

DON ARIAS

Je l'ai de votre part longtemps entretenu ;
J'ai fait mon pouvoir, Sire, et n'ai rien obtenu. 560

DON FERNAND

Justes cieux ! ainsi donc un sujet téméraire
A si peu de respect et de soin de me plaire !
Il offense don Diègue, et méprise son roi !
Au milieu de ma cour il me donne la loi !
Qu'il soit brave guerrier, qu'il soit grand capitaine, 565
Je saurai bien rabattre une humeur si hautaine.
Fût-il la valeur même, et le dieu des combats,
Il verra ce que c'est que de n'obéir pas.
Quoi qu'ait pu mériter une telle insolence,
Je l'ai voulu d'abord traiter sans violence ; 570
Mais puisqu'il en abuse, allez dès aujourd'hui,
Soit qu'il résiste ou non, vous assurer de lui.

DON SANCHE

Peut-être un peu de temps le rendrait moins rebelle :
On l'a pris tout bouillant encor de sa querelle ;
Sire, dans la chaleur d'un premier mouvement, 575
Un cœur si généreux se rend malaisément.
Il voit bien qu'il a tort, mais une âme si haute
N'est pas sitôt réduite à confesser sa faute.

DON FERNAND

Don Sanche, taisez-vous, et soyez averti
Qu'on se rend criminel à prendre son parti. 580

DON SANCHE

J'obéis, et me tais ; mais, de grâce encor, Sire,
Deux mots en sa défense.

DON FERNAND

Et que pouvez-vous dire ?

DON SANCHE

Qu'une âme accoutumée aux grandes actions

Né se peut abaisser à des soumissions :

Elle n'en conçoit point qui s'expliquent sans honte ; 585

Et c'est à ce mot seul qu'a résisté le comte.

Il trouve en son devoir un peu trop de rigueur,

Et vous obéirait, s'il avait moins de cœur.

Commandez que son bras, nourri dans les alarmes,

Répare cette injure à la pointe des armes ; 590

Il satisfera, Sire ; et vienne qui voudra,

Attendant qu'il l'ait su, voici qui répondra.

DON FERNAND

Vous perdez le respect ; mais je pardonne à l'âge,

Et j'excuse l'ardeur en un jeune courage.

Un roi dont la prudence a de meilleurs objets 595

Est meilleur ménager du sang de ses sujets :

Je veille pour les miens, mes soucis les conservent,

Comme le chef a soin des membres qui le servent.

Ainsi votre raison n'est pas raison pour moi :

Vous parlez en soldat ; je dois agir en roi ; 600

Et quoi qu'on veuille dire, et quoi qu'il ose croire,

Le comte à m'obéir ne peut perdre sa gloire.

D'ailleurs l'affront me touche : il a perdu d'honneur

Celui que de mon fils j'ai fait le gouverneur ;

S'attaquer à mon choix, c'est se prendre à moi-même, 605

Et faire un attentat sur le pouvoir suprême.

N'en parlons plus. Au reste, on a vu dix vaisseaux

De nos vieux ennemis arborer les drapeaux ;

Vers la bouche du fleuve ils ont osé paraître.

DON ARIAS

Les Mores ont appris par force à vous connaître, 610
 Et tant de fois vaincus, ils ont perdu le cœur
 De se plus hasarder contre un si grand vainqueur.

DON FERNAND

Ils ne verront jamais sans quelque jalousie
 Mon sceptre, en dépit d'eux, régir l'Andalousie ;
 Et ce pays si beau, qu'ils ont trop possédé, 615
 Avec un œil d'envie est toujours regardé.
 C'est l'unique raison qui m'a fait dans Séville
 Placer depuis dix ans le trône de Castille,
 Pour les voir de plus près, et d'un ordre plus prompt
 Renverser aussitôt ce qu'ils entreprendront. 620

DON ARIAS

Ils savent aux dépens de leurs plus dignes têtes
 Combien votre présence assure vos conquêtes :
 Vous n'avez rien à craindre.

DON FERNAND

Et rien à négliger :

Le trop de confiance attire le danger ;
 Et vous n'ignorez pas qu'avec fort peu de peine 625
 Un flux de pleine mer jusqu'ici les amène.
 Toutefois j'aurais tort de jeter dans les cœurs,
 L'avis étant mal sûr, de paniques terreurs.
 L'effroi que produirait cette alarme inutile,
 Dans la nuit qui survient troublerait trop la ville : 630
 Faites doubler la garde aux murs et sur le port.
 C'est assez pour ce soir.

SCÈNE VII

DON FERNAND, DON SANCHE, DON ALONSE

DON ALONSE

Sire, le comte est mort :

Don Diègue, par son fils, a vengé son offense.

DON FERNAND

Dès que j'ai su l'affront, j'ai prévu la vengeance ;
Et j'ai voulu dès lors prévenir ce malheur.

635

DON ALONSE

Chimène à vos genoux apporte sa douleur ;
Elle vient toute en pleurs vous demander justice.

DON FERNAND

Bien qu'à ses déplaisirs mon âme compatisse,
Ce que le comte a fait semble avoir mérité
Ce digne châtiment de sa témérité.
Quelque juste pourtant que puisse être sa peine,
Je ne puis sans regret perdre un tel capitaine.
Après un long service à mon État rendu,
Après son sang pour moi mille fois répandu,
A quelques sentiments que son orgueil m'oblige,
La perte m'affaiblit, et son trépas m'afflige.

640

645

SCÈNE VIII

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, CHIMÈNE, DON SANCHE,
DON ARIAS, DON ALONSE

CHIMÈNE

Sire, Sire, justice !

DON DIÈGUE

Ah ! Sire, écoutez-nous.

CHIMÈNE

Je me jette à vos pieds.

DON DIÈGUE

J'embrasse vos genoux.

CHIMÈNE

Je demande justice.

DON DIÈGUE

Entendez ma défense.

CHIMÈNE

D'un jeune audacieux punissez l'insolence :

650

Il a de votre sceptre abattu le soutien,

Il a tué mon père.

DON DIÈGUE

Il a vengé le sien.

CHIMÈNE

Au sang de ses sujets un roi doit la justice.

DON DIÈGUE

Pour la juste vengeance il n'est point de supplice.

DON FERNAND

Levez-vous l'un et l'autre, et parlez à loisir.

655

Chimène, je prends part à votre déplaisir ;

D'une égale douleur je sens mon âme atteinte.
 Vous parlerez après ; ne troublez pas sa plainte.

CHIMÈNE

Sire, mon père est mort ; mes yeux ont vu son sang
 Couler à gros bouillons de son généreux flanc ; 660
 Ce sang qui tant de fois garantit vos murailles,
 Ce sang qui tant de fois vous gagna des batailles,
 Ce sang qui tout sorti fume encor de courroux
 De se voir répandu pour d'autres que pour vous,
 Qu'au milieu des hasards n'osait verser la guerre, 665
 Rodrigue en votre cour vient d'en couvrir la terre.
 J'ai couru sur le lieu, sans force et sans couleur :
 Je l'ai trouvé sans vie. Excusez ma douleur,
 Sire, la voix me manque à ce récit funeste ;
 Mes pleurs et mes soupirs vous diront mieux le reste. 670

DON FERNAND

Prends courage, ma fille, et sache qu'aujourd'hui
 Ton roi ~~te~~ veut servir de père au lieu de lui.

CHIMÈNE

Sire, de trop d'honneur ma misère est suivie.
Je vous l'ai déjà dit, je l'ai trouvé sans vie ;
 Son flanc était ouvert ; et pour mieux m'émouvoir, 675
Son sang sur la poussière écrivait mon devoir ;
 Ou plutôt sa valeur en cet état réduite
 Me parlait par sa plaie, et hâtait ma poursuite ;
 Et pour se faire entendre au plus juste des rois,
 Par cette triste bouche elle empruntait ma voix. 680

Sire, ne souffrez pas que sous votre puissance
 Règne devant vos yeux une telle licence ;
 Que les plus valeureux, avec impunité,
 Soient exposés aux coups de la témérité ;

Qu'un jeune audacieux triomphe de leur gloire, 685
 Se baigne dans leur sang, et brave leur mémoire.
 Un si vaillant guerrier qu'on vient de vous ravir
 Éteint, s'il n'est vengé, l'ardeur de vous servir.
 Enfin mon père est mort, j'en demande vengeance,
 Plus pour votre intérêt que pour mon allégeance. 690
 Vous perdez en la mort d'un homme de son rang :
 Vengez-la par une autre, et le sang par le sang.
 Immolez, non à moi, mais à votre couronne,
 Mais à votre grandeur, mais à votre personne ;
 Immolez, dis-je, Sire, au bien de tout l'État 695
 Tout ce qu'enorgueillit un si haut attentat.

DON FERNAND

Don Diègue, répondez.

DON DIÈGUE

Qu'on est digne d'envie
 Lorsqu'en perdant la force on perd aussi la vie,
 Et qu'un long âge apprête aux hommes généreux,
 Au bout de leur carrière, un destin malheureux ! 700
 Moi, dont les longs travaux ont acquis tant de gloire,
 Moi, que jadis partout a suivi la victoire,
 Je me vois aujourd'hui, pour avoir trop vécu,
 Recevoir un affront et demeurer vaincu.
 Ce que n'a pu jamais combat, siège, embuscade, 705
 Ce que n'a pu jamais Aragon ni Grenade,
 Ni tous vos ennemis, ni tous mes envieux,
 Le comte en votre cour l'a fait presque à vos yeux,
 Jaloux de votre choix, et fier de l'avantage
 Que lui donnait sur moi l'impuissance de l'âge. 710
 Sire, ainsi ces cheveux blanchis sous le harnois,
 Ce sang pour vous servir prodigué tant de fois,
Ce bras, jadis l'effroi d'une armée ennemie,

ACTE II, SCÈNE VIII

Descendaient au tombeau tous chargés d'infamie,
Si je n'eusse produit un fils digne de moi,
Digne de son pays et digne de son roi.
Il m'a prêté sa main, il a tué le comte ;
Il m'a rendu l'honneur, il a lavé ma honte.
Si montrer du courage et du ressentiment,
Si venger un soufflet mérite un châtiment,
Sur moi seul doit tomber l'éclat de la tempête :
Quand le bras a failli, l'on en punit la tête.
Qu'on nomme crime, ou non, ce qui fait nos débats,
Sire, j'en suis la tête, il n'en est que le bras.
Si Chimène se plaint qu'il a tué son père,
Il ne l'eût jamais fait si je l'eusse pu faire.
Immolez donc ce chef que les ans vont ravir,
Et conservez pour vous le bras qui peut servir.
Aux dépens de mon sang satisfaites Chimène :
Je n'y résiste point, je consens à ma peine ;
Et loin de murmurer d'un rigoureux décret,
Mourant sans déshonneur, je mourrai sans regret.

7.

DON FERNAND

L'affaire est d'importance, et, bien considérée,
Mérite en plein conseil d'être délibérée.

Don Sanche, remettez Chimène en sa maison.
Don Diègue aura ma cour et sa foi pour prison.
Qu'on me cherche son fils. Je vous ferai justice.

73

CHIMÈNE

Il est juste, grand roi, qu'un meurtrier périsse.

DON FERNAND

Prends du repos, ma fille, et calme tes douleurs.

CHIMÈNE

Ordonner du repos, c'est croître mes malheurs.

7

ACTE III

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE

DON RODRIGUE, ELVIRE

ELVIRE

Rodrigue, qu'as-tu fait ? où viens-tu, misérable ?

DON RODRIGUE

Suivre le triste cours de mon sort déplorable.

ELVIRE

Où prends-tu cette audace et ce nouvel orgueil,
De paraître en des lieux que tu remplis de deuil ?
Quoi ? viens-tu jusqu'ici braver l'ombre du comte ?
Ne l'as-tu pas tué ?

745

DON RODRIGUE

Sa vie était ma honte :
Mon honneur de ma main a voulu cet effort.

ELVIRE

Mais chercher ton asile en la maison du mort !
Jamais un meurtrier en fit-il son refuge ?

DON RODRIGUE

Et je n'y viens aussi que m'offrir à mon juge. 750
Ne me regarde plus d'un visage étonné ;
Je cherche le trépas après l'avoir donné.
Mon juge est mon amour, mon juge est ma Chimène :

Je mérite la mort de mériter sa haine,
Et j'en viens recevoir, comme un bien souverain,
Et l'arrêt de sa bouche, et le coup de sa main.

755

ELVIRE

Fuis plutôt de ses yeux, fuis de sa violence ;
A ses premiers transports dérobe ta présence :
Va, ne t'expose point aux premiers mouvements
Que poussera l'ardeur de ses ressentiments.

760

DON RODRIGUE

Non, non, ce cher objet à qui j'ai pu déplaire
Ne peut pour mon supplice avoir trop de colère ;
Et j'évite cent morts qui me vont accabler,
Si pour mourir plus tôt je puis la redoubler.

ELVIRE

Chimène est au palais, de pleurs toute baignée,
Et n'en reviendra point que bien accompagnée.
Rodrigue, fuis, de grâce ; ôte-moi de souci.
Que ne dira-t-on point si l'on te voit ici ?
Veux-tu qu'un médisant, pour comble à sa misère,
L'accuse d'y souffrir l'assassin de son père ?
Elle va revenir ; elle vient, je la voi :
Du moins, pour son honneur, Rodrigue, cache-toi.

765

770

SCÈNE II

DON SANCHE, CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

DON SANCHE

Oui, Madame, il vous faut de sanglantes victimes :
Votre colère est juste, et vos pleurs légitimes ;
Et je n'entreprends pas, à force de parler,

775

Ni de vous adoucir, ni de vous consoler.
Mais si de vous servir je puis être capable,
Employez mon épée à punir le coupable ;
Employez mon amour à venger cette mort :
Sous vos commandements mon bras sera trop fort. 780

CHIMÈNE

Malheureuse !

DON SANCHE

De grâce, acceptez mon service.

CHIMÈNE

J'offenserais le roi, qui m'a promis justice.

DON SANCHE

Vous savez qu'elle marche avec tant de longueur,
Qu'assez souvent le crime échappe à sa longueur ;
Son cours lent et douteux fait trop perdre de larmes. 785
Souffrez qu'un cavalier vous venge par les armes :
La voie en est plus sûre, et plus prompte à punir.

CHIMÈNE

C'est le dernier remède ; et s'il y faut venir,
Et que de mes malheurs cette pitié vous dure,
Vous serez libre alors de venger mon injure. 790

DON SANCHE

C'est l'unique bonheur où mon âme prétend ;
Et pouvant l'espérer, je m'en vais trop content.

SCÈNE III

CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

CHIMÈNE

Enfin je me vois libre, et je puis sans contrainte
De mes vives douleurs te faire voir l'atteinte ;
Je puis donner passage à mes tristes soupirs ; 795
Je puis t'ouvrir mon âme et tous mes déplaisirs.

Mon père est mort, Elvire ; et la première épée
Dont s'est armé Rodrigue a sa trame coupée.
Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez-vous en eau !
La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau, 800
Et m'oblige à venger, après ce coup funeste,
Celle que je n'ai plus sur celle qui me reste.

ELVIRE

Reposez-vous, Madame.

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! que mal à propos
Dans un malheur si grand tu parles de repos !
Par où sera jamais ma douleur apaisée, 805
Si je ne puis haïr la main qui l'a causée ?
Et que dois-je espérer qu'un tourment éternel,
Si je poursuis un crime, aimant le criminel ?

ELVIRE

Il vous prive d'un père, et vous l'aimez encore !

CHIMÈNE

C'est peu de dire aimer, Elvire : je l'adore ; 810
Ma passion s'oppose à mon ressentiment ;
Dedans mon ennemi je trouve mon amant ;

Et je sens qu'en dépit de toute ma colère
 Rodrigue dans mon cœur combat encor mon père :
 Il l'attaque, il le presse, il cède, il se défend, 815
 Tantôt fort, tantôt faible, et tantôt triomphant ;
 Mais en ce dur combat de colère et de flamme,
 Il déchire mon cœur sans partager mon âme ;
 Et quoi que mon amour ait sur moi de pouvoir,
Je ne consulte point pour suivre mon devoir : 820
Je cours sans balancer où mon honneur m'oblige.
 Rodrigue m'est bien cher, son intérêt m'afflige ;
 Mon cœur prend son parti ; mais malgré son effort,
 Je sais ce que je suis, et que mon père est mort.

ELVIRE

Pensez-vous le poursuivre ?

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! cruelle pensée ! 825
 Et cruelle poursuite où je me vois forcée !
Je demande sa tête, et crains de l'obtenir :
 Ma mort suivra la sienne, et je le veux punir !

ELVIRE

Quittez, quittez, Madame, un dessein si tragique ;
 Ne vous imposez point de loi si tyrannique. 830

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! mon père étant mort, et presque entre mes bras,
 Son sang crier vengeance, et je ne l'orrai pas !
 Mon cœur, honteusement surpris par d'autres charmes,
 Croira ne lui devoir que d'impuissantes larmes !
 Et je pourrai souffrir qu'un amour suborneur 835
 Sous un lâche silence étouffe mon honneur !

ELVIRE

Madame, croyez-moi, vous serez excusable
D'avoir moins de chaleur contre un objet aimable,
Contre un amant si cher : vous avez assez fait,
Vous avez vu le roi ; n'en pressez point l'effet, 840
Ne vous obstinez point en cette humeur étrange.

CHIMÈNE

Il y va de ma gloire, il faut que je me venge ;
Et de quoi que nous flatte un désir amoureux,
Toute excuse est honteuse aux esprits généreux.

ELVIRE

Mais vous aimez Rodrigue, il ne vous peut déplaire. 845

CHIMÈNE

Je l'avoue.

ELVIRE

Après tout, que pensez-vous donc faire ?

CHIMÈNE

Pour conserver ma gloire et finir mon ennui,
Le poursuivre, le perdre, et mourir après lui.

SCÈNE IV

DON RODRIGUE, CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

DON RODRIGUE

Eh bien ! sans vous donner la peine de poursuivre,
Assurez-vous l'honneur de m'empêcher de vivre. 850

CHIMÈNE

Elvire, où sommes-nous, et qu'est-ce que je voi ?
Rodrigue en ma maison ! Rodrigue devant moi !

DON RODRIGUE

N'épargnez point mon sang : goûtez sans résistance
La douceur de ma perte et de votre vengeance.

CHIMÈNE

Hélas !

DON RODRIGUE

Écoute-moi.

CHIMÈNE

Je me meurs.

DON RODRIGUE

Un moment.

855

CHIMÈNE

Va, laisse-moi mourir.

DON RODRIGUE

Quatre mots seulement :

Après ne me réponds qu'avecque cette épée.

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! du sang de mon père encor toute trempée !

DON RODRIGUE

Ma Chimène . . .

CHIMÈNE

Ote-moi cet objet odieux,

Qui reproche ton crime et ta vie à mes yeux.

860

DON RODRIGUE

Regarde-le plutôt pour exciter ta haine,
Pour croître ta colère, et pour hâter ma peine.

CHIMÈNE

Il est teint de mon sang.

DON RODRIGUE

Plonge-le dans le mien,
Et fais-lui perdre ainsi la teinture du tien.

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! quelle cruauté, qui tout en un jour tue 865
Le père par le fer, la fille par la vue !
Ote-moi cet objet, je ne le puis souffrir :
Tu veux que je t'écoute, et tu me fais mourir !

DON RODRIGUE

Je fais ce que tu veux, mais sans quitter l'envie
De finir par tes mains ma déplorable vie ; 870
Car enfin n'attends pas de mon affection
Un lâche repentir d'une bonne action.
L'irréparable effet d'une chaleur trop prompte
Déshonorait mon père, et me couvrait de honte.
Tu sais comme un soufflet touche un homme de cœur ; 875
J'avais part à l'affront, j'en ai cherché l'auteur :
Je l'ai vu, j'ai vengé mon honneur et mon père ;
Je le ferais encor, si j'avais à le faire. *W*
Ce n'est pas qu'en effet contre mon père et moi
Ma flamme assez longtemps n'ait combattu pour toi ; 880
Juge de son pouvoir : dans une telle offense
J'ai pu délibérer si j'en prendrais vengeance.
Réduit à te déplaire, ou souffrir un affront,
J'ai pensé qu'à son tour mon bras était trop prompt ;
Je me suis accusé de trop de violence ; 885
Et ta beauté sans doute emportait la balance,
A moins que d'opposer à tes plus forts appas
Qu'un homme sans honneur ne te méritait pas ;
Que malgré cette part que j'avais en ton âme,
Qui m'aima généreux me haïrait infâme ; 890

Qu'écouter ton amour, obéir à sa voix,
 C'était m'en rendre indigne et diffamer ton choix.
 Je te le dis encore ; et quoique j'en soupire,
 Jusqu'au dernier soupir je veux bien le redire :
 Je t'ai fait une offense, et j'ai dû m'y porter
 Pour effacer ma honte, et pour te mériter ;
 Mais quitte envers l'honneur, et quitte envers mon père
 C'est maintenant à toi que je viens satisfaire :
 C'est pour t'offrir mon sang qu'en ce lieu tu me vois.
 J'ai fait ce que j'ai dû, je fais ce que je dois.
 Je sais qu'un père mort t'arme contre mon crime ;
 Je ne t'ai pas voulu dérober ta victime :
 Immole avec courage au sang qu'il a perdu
 Celui qui met sa gloire à l'avoir répandu.

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! Rodrigue, il est vrai, quoique ton ennemie,
Je ne te puis blâmer d'avoir fui l'infamie ;
 Et de quelque façon qu'éclatent mes douleurs,
 Je ne t'accuse point, je pleure mes malheurs.
 Je sais ce que l'honneur, après un tel outrage,
 Demandait à l'ardeur d'un généreux courage :
 Tu n'as fait le devoir que d'un homme de bien ;
 Mais aussi, le faisant, tu m'as appris le mien.
Ta funeste valeur m'instruit par ta victoire ;
 Elle a vengé ton père et soutenu ta gloire :
 Même soin me regarde, et j'ai, pour m'affliger,
 Ma gloire à soutenir, et mon père à venger.
 Hélas ! ton intérêt ici me désespère :
 Si quelque autre malheur m'avait ravi mon père,
 Mon âme aurait trouvé dans le bien de te voir
 L'unique allégement qu'elle eût pu recevoir ;
Et contre ma douleur j'aurais senti des charmes,

Quand une main si chère eût essuyé mes larmes.
 Mais il me faut te perdre après l'avoir perdu ;
 Cet effort sur ma flamme à mon honneur est dû ;
 Et cet affreux devoir, dont l'ordre m'assassine, 925
 Me force à travailler moi-même à ta ruine.
 Car enfin n'attends pas de mon affection
 De lâches sentiments pour ta punition.
 De quoi qu'en ta faveur notre amour m'entretienne,
 Ma générosité doit répondre à la tienne : 930
 Tu t'es, en m'offensant, montré digne de moi ;
 Je me dois, par ta mort, montrer digne de toi.

DON RODRIGUE

Ne diffère donc plus ce que l'honneur t'ordonne :
 Il demande ma tête, et je te l'abandonne ;
 Fais-en un sacrifice à ce noble intérêt : 935
 Le coup m'en sera doux, aussi bien que l'arrêt.
 Attendre après mon crime une lente justice,
 C'est reculer ta gloire autant que mon supplice.
 Je mourrai trop heureux, mourant d'un coup si beau.

CHIMÈNE

Va, je suis ta partie, et non pas ton bourreau. 940
 Si tu m'offres ta tête, est-ce à moi de la prendre ?
 Je la dois attaquer, mais tu dois la défendre ;
 C'est d'un autre que toi qu'il me faut l'obtenir,
 Et je dois te poursuivre, et non pas te punir.

DON RODRIGUE

De quoi qu'en ma faveur notre amour t'entretienne, 945
 Ta générosité doit répondre à la mienne ;
 Et pour venger un père emprunter d'autres bras,
 Ma Chimène, crois-moi, c'est n'y répondre pas :

Ma main seule du mien a su venger l'offense,
Ta main seule du tien doit prendre la vengeance.

950

CHIMÈNE

Cruel ! à quel propos sur ce point t'obstiner ?
Tu t'es vengé sans aide, et tu m'en veux donner !
Je suivrai ton exemple, et j'ai trop de courage
Pour souffrir qu'avec toi ma gloire se partage.
Mon père et mon honneur ne veulent rien devoir
Aux traits de ton amour ni de ton désespoir.

955

DON RODRIGUE

Rigoureux point d'honneur ! hélas ! quoi que je fasse,
Ne pourrai-je à la fin obtenir cette grâce ?
Au nom d'un père mort, ou de notre amitié,
Punis-moi par vengeance, ou du moins par pitié.
Ton malheureux amant aura bien moins de peine
A mourir par ta main qu'à vivre avec ta haine.

960

CHIMÈNE

Va, je ne te hais point.

DON RODRIGUE

Tu le dois.

CHIMÈNE

Je ne puis.

DON RODRIGUE

Crains-tu si peu le blâme, et si peu les faux bruits ?
Quand on saura mon crime et que ta flamme dure,
Que ne publieront point l'envie et l'imposture !
Force-les au silence, et sans plus discourir,
Sauve ta renommée en me faisant mourir.

965

CHIMÈNE

Elle éclate bien mieux en te laissant la vie ;
 Et je veux que la voix de la plus noire envie 970
 Élève au ciel ma gloire et plaigne mes ennuis,
 Sachant que je t'adore et que je te poursuis.
 Va-t'en, ne montre plus à ma douleur extrême
 Ce qu'il faut que je perde, encore que je l'aime.
 Dans l'ombre de la nuit cache bien ton départ : 975
 Si l'on te voit sortir, mon honneur court hasard.
 La seule occasion qu'aura la médisance,
 C'est de savoir qu'ici j'ai souffert ta présence :
 Ne lui donne point lieu d'attaquer ma vertu.

DON RODRIGUE

Que je meure !

CHIMÈNE

Va-t'en.

DON RODRIGUE

A quoi te résous-tu ? 980

CHIMÈNE

Malgré des feux si beaux, qui troublent ma colère,
 Je ferai mon possible à bien venger mon père ;
 Mais malgré la rigueur d'un si cruel devoir,
 Mon unique souhait est de ne rien pouvoir.

DON RODRIGUE

O miracle d'amour !

CHIMÈNE

O comble de misères ! 985

DON RODRIGUE

Que de maux et de pleurs nous coûteront nos pères !

CHIMÈNE

Rodrigue, qui l'eût cru ?

DON RODRIGUE

Chimène, qui l'eût dit ?

CHIMÈNE

Que notre heur fût si proche et sitôt se perdît ?

DON RODRIGUE

Et que si près du port, contre toute apparence,
Un orage si prompt brisât notre espérance ?

990

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! mortelles douleurs !

DON RODRIGUE

Ah ! regrets superflus !

CHIMÈNE

Va-t'en, encore un coup, je ne t'écoute plus.

DON RODRIGUE

Adieu : je vais traîner une mourante vie,
Tant que par ta poursuite elle me soit ravie.

CHIMÈNE

Si j'en obtiens l'effet, je t'engage ma foi
De ne respirer pas un moment après toi.
Adieu : sors, et surtout garde bien qu'on te voie.

995

ELVIRE

Madame, quelques maux que le ciel nous envoie . . .

CHIMÈNE

Ne m'importune plus, laisse-moi soupirer,
Je cherche le silence et la nuit pour pleurer.

1000

SCÈNE V

DON DIÈGUE

Jamais nous ne goûtons de parfaite allégresse !
 Nos plus heureux succès sont mêlés de tristesse ;
 Toujours quelques soucis en ces événements
 Troublent la pureté de nos contentements.
 Au milieu du bonheur mon âme en sent l'atteinte : 1005
 Je nage dans la joie, et je tremble de crainte.
 J'ai vu mort l'ennemi qui m'avait outragé ;
 Et je ne saurais voir la main qui m'a vengé.
 En vain je m'y travaille, et d'un soin inutile,
 Tout cassé que je suis, je cours toute la ville : 1010
 Ce peu que mes vieux ans m'ont laissé de vigueur
 Se consume sans fruit à chercher ce vainqueur.
 A toute heure, en tous lieux, dans une nuit si sombre,
 Je pense l'embrasser, et n'embrasse qu'une ombre ;
 Et mon amour, déçu par cet objet trompeur, 1015
 Se forme des soupçons qui redoublent ma peur.
 Je ne découvre point de marques de sa fuite ;
 Je crains du comte mort les amis et la suite ;
 Leur nombre m'épouvante, et confond ma raison.
 Rodrigue ne vit plus, ou respire en prison. 1020
 Justes cieux ! me trompé-je encore à l'apparence,
 Ou si je vois enfin mon unique espérance ?
 C'est lui, n'en doutons plus ; mes vœux sont exaucés,
 Ma crainte est dissipée, et mes ennuis cessés.

SCÈNE VI

DON DIÈGUE, DON RODRIGUE

DON DIÈGUE

Rodrigue, enfin le ciel permet que je te voie !

1025

DON RODRIGUE

Hélas !

DON DIÈGUE

Ne mêle point de soupirs à ma joie ;
 Laisse-moi prendre haleine afin de te louer.
 Ma valeur n'a point lieu de te désavouer :
 Tu l'as bien imitée, et ton illustre audace
 Fait bien revivre en toi les héros de ma race :
 C'est d'eux que tu descends, c'est de moi que tu viens :
 Ton premier coup d'épée égale tous les miens ;
 Et d'une belle ardeur ta jeunesse animée
 Par cette grande épreuve atteint ma renommée.
 Appui de ma vieillesse, et comble de mon heur,
 Touche ces cheveux blancs à qui tu rends l'honneur,
 Viens baiser cette joue, et reconnais la place
 Où fut empreint l'affront que ton courage efface.

1030

1035

DON RODRIGUE

L'honneur vous en est dû : je ne pouvais pas moins,
 Étant sorti de vous et nourri par vos soins.
 Je m'en tiens trop heureux, et mon âme est ravie
 Que mon coup d'essai plaise à qui je dois la vie ;
 Mais parmi vos plaisirs ne soyez point jaloux
 Si je m'ose à mon tour satisfaire après vous.
 Souffrez qu'en liberté mon désespoir éclate ;
Assez et trop longtemps votre discours le flatte.

1040

1045

Je ne me repens point de vous avoir servi ;
 Mais rendez-moi le bien que ce coup m'a ravi.
 Mon bras, pour vous venger, armé contre ma flamme,
 Par ce coup glorieux m'a privé de mon âme ; 1050
 Ne me dites plus rien ; pour vous j'ai tout perdu :
 Ce que je vous devais, je vous l'ai bien rendu.

DON DIÈGUE

Porte, porte plus haut le fruit de ta victoire :
 Je t'ai donné la vie, et tu me rends ma gloire ;
 Et d'autant que l'honneur m'est plus cher que le jour, 1055
 D'autant plus maintenant je te dois de retour.
 Mais d'un cœur magnanime éloigne ces faiblesses ;
 Nous n'avons qu'un honneur, il est tant de maîtresses !
 L'amour n'est qu'un plaisir, l'honneur est un devoir.

DON RODRIGUE

Ah ! que me dites-vous ?

DON DIÈGUE

Ce que tu dois savoir. 1060

DON RODRIGUE

Mon honneur offensé sur moi-même se venge ;
 Et vous m'osez pousser à la honte du change !
 L'infamie est pareille, et suit également
 Le guerrier sans courage et le perfide amant.
 A ma fidélité ne faites point d'injure ; 1065
 Souffrez-moi généreux sans me rendre parjure :
 Mes liens sont trop forts pour être ainsi rompus ;
 Ma foi m'engage encor si je n'espère plus ;
 Et ne pouvant quitter ni posséder Chimène,
 Le trépas que je cherche est ma plus douce peine. 1070

DON DIÈGUE

Il n'est pas temps encor de chercher le trépas :
Ton prince et ton pays ont besoin de ton bras.
La flotte qu'on craignait, dans ce grand fleuve entrée,
Croît surprendre la ville et piller la contrée.
Les Mores vont descendre, et le flux et la nuit
Dans une heure à nos murs les amène sans bruit.
La cour est en désordre, et le peuple en alarmes :
On n'entend que des cris, on ne voit que des larmes.
Dans ce malheur public mon bonheur a permis
Que j'ai trouvé chez moi cinq cents de mes amis,
Qui sachant mon affront, poussés d'un même zèle,
Se venaient tous offrir à venger ma querelle.
Tu les as prévenus ; mais leurs vaillantes mains
Se tremperont bien mieux au sang des Africains.
Va marcher à leur tête où l'honneur te demande :
C'est toi que veut pour chef leur généreuse bande.
De ces vieux ennemis va soutenir l'abord :
Là, si tu veux mourir, trouve une belle mort ;
Prends-en l'occasion, puisqu'elle t'est offerte ;
Fais devoir à ton roi son salut à ta perte ;
Mais reviens-en plutôt les palmes sur le front.
Ne borne pas ta gloire à venger un affront ;
Porte-la plus avant : force par ta vaillance
La justice au pardon, et Chimène au silence ;
Si tu l'aimes, apprends que revenir vainqueur
C'est l'unique moyen de regagner son cœur.
Mais le temps est trop cher pour le perdre en paroles :
Je t'arrête en discours, et je veux que tu voles.
Viens, suis-moi, va combattre, et montrer à ton roi
Que ce qu'il perd au comte il le recouvre en toi.

1075

1080

1085

1090

1095

1100

ACTE IV

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE

CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

CHIMÈNE

N'est-ce point un faux bruit ? le sais-tu bien, Elvire ?

ELVIRE

Vous ne croiriez jamais comme chacun l'admire,
Et porte jusqu'au ciel, d'une commune voix,
De ce jeune héros les glorieux exploits.
Les Mores devant lui n'ont paru qu'à leur honte ; 1105
Leur abord fut bien prompt, leur fuite encor plus prompte.
Trois heures de combat laissent à nos guerriers
Une victoire entière et deux rois prisonniers.
La valeur de leur chef ne trouvait point d'obstacles.

CHIMÈNE

Et la main de Rodrigue a fait tous ces miracles ? 1110

ELVIRE

De ses nobles efforts ces deux rois sont le prix :
Sa main les a vaincus, et sa main les a pris.

CHIMÈNE

De qui peux-tu savoir ces nouvelles étranges ?

ELVIRE

Du peuple, qui partout fait sonner ses louanges,
Le nomme de sa joie et l'objet et l'auteur, 1115
Son ange tutélaire, et son libérateur.

CHIMÈNE

Et le roi, de quel œil voit-il tant de vaillance ?

ELVIRE

Rodrigue n'ose encor paraître en sa présence ;
 Mais don Diègue ravi lui présente enchaînés,
 Au nom de ce vainqueur, ces captifs couronnés,
 Et demande pour grâce à ce généreux prince
 Qu'il daigne voir la main qui sauve la province.

1120

CHIMÈNE

Mais n'est-il point blessé ?

ELVIRE

Je n'en ai rien appris.
 Vous changez de couleur ! reprenez vos esprits.

CHIMÈNE

Reprenons donc aussi ma colère affaiblie :
 Pour avoir soin de lui faut-il que je m'oublie ?
 On le vante, on le loue, et mon cœur y consent !
 Mon honneur est muet, mon devoir impuissant !
 Silence, mon amour, laisse agir ma colère :
 S'il a vaincu deux rois, il a tué mon père ;
 Ces tristes vêtements, où je lis mon malheur,
 Sont les premiers effets qu'ait produit sa valeur ,
 Et quoi qu'on die ailleurs d'un cœur si magnanime,
 Ici tous les objets me parlent de son crime.

1125

1130

Vous qui rendez la force à mes ressentiments,
 Voiles, crêpes, habits, lugubres ornements,
 Pompe que me prescrit sa première victoire,
 Contre ma passion soutenez bien ma gloire ;
Et lorsque mon amour prendra trop de pouvoir,

1135

Parlez à mon esprit de mon triste devoir,
Attaquez sans rien craindre une main triomphante.

1140

ELVIRE

Modérez ces transports, voici venir l'infante.

SCÈNE II

L'INFANTE, CHIMÈNE, LÉONOR, ELVIRE

L'INFANTE

Je ne viens pas ici consoler tes douleurs ;
Je viens plutôt mêler mes soupirs à tes pleurs.

CHIMÈNE

Prenez bien plutôt part à la commune joie,
Et goûtez le bonheur que le ciel vous envoie,
Madame : autre que moi n'a droit de soupirer.
Le péril dont Rodrigue a su nous retirer,
Et le salut public que vous rendent ses armes,
A moi seule aujourd'hui souffrent encor les larmes :
Il a sauvé la ville, il a servi son roi ;
Et son bras valeureux n'est funeste qu'à moi.

1145

1150

L'INFANTE

Ma Chimène, il est vrai qu'il a fait des merveilles.

CHIMÈNE

Déjà ce bruit fâcheux a frappé mes oreilles ;
Et je l'entends partout publier hautement
Aussi brave guerrier que malheureux amant.

1155

L'INFANTE

Qu'a de fâcheux pour toi ce discours populaire ?
Ce jeune Mars qu'il loue a su jadis te plaire :

Il possédait ton âme, il vivait sous tes lois ;
Et vanter sa valeur, c'est honorer ton choix. 1160

CHIMÈNE

Chacun peut le vanter avec quelque justice ;
Mais pour moi sa louange est un nouveau supplice.
On aigrit ma douleur en l'élevant si haut :
Je vois ce que je perds quand je vois ce qu'il vaut.
Ah ! cruels dé plaisirs à l'esprit d'une amante ! 1165
Plus j'apprends son mérite, et plus mon feu s'augmente :
Cependant mon devoir est toujours le plus fort,
Et malgré mon amour, va poursuivre sa mort.

L'INFANTE

Hier ce devoir te mit en une haute estime ;
L'effort que tu te fis parut si magnanime, 1170
Si digne d'un grand cœur, que chacun à la cour
Admirait ton courage et plaignait ton amour.
Mais croirais-tu l'avis d'une amitié fidèle ?

CHIMÈNE

Ne vous obéir pas me rendrait criminelle.

L'INFANTE

Ce qui fut juste alors ne l'est plus aujourd'hui. 1175
Rodrigue maintenant est notre unique appui,
L'espérance et l'amour d'un peuple qui l'adore,
Le soutien de Castille, et la terreur du More.
Le roi même est d'accord de cette vérité,
Que ton père en lui seul se voit ressuscité ; 1180
Et si tu veux enfin qu'en deux mots je m'explique,
Tu poursuis en sa mort la ruine publique.
Quoi ! pour venger un père est-il jamais permis
De livrer sa patrie aux mains des ennemis ?

Contre nous ta poursuite est-elle légitime, 1185
 Et pour être punis avons-nous part au crime ?
 Ce n'est pas qu'après tout tu doives épouser
 Celui qu'un père mort t'obligeait d'accuser :
 Je te voudrais moi-même en arracher l'envie ;
 Ote-lui ton amour, mais laisse-nous sa vie. 1190

CHIMÈNE

Ah ! ce n'est pas à moi d'avoir tant de bonté ;
 Le devoir qui m'aigrit n'a rien de limité.
 Quoique pour ce vainqueur mon âme s'intéresse,
 Quoiqu'un peuple l'adore et qu'un roi le caresse,
 Qu'il soit environné des plus vaillants guerriers, 1195
 J'irai sous mes cyprès accabler ses lauriers.

L'INFANTE

C'est générosité quand pour venger un père
 Notre devoir attaque une tête si chère ;
 Mais c'en est une encor d'un plus illustre rang,
 Quand on donne au public les intérêts du sang. 1200
 Non, crois-moi, c'est assez que d'éteindre ta flamme ;
 Il sera trop puni s'il n'est plus dans ton âme.
 Que le bien du pays t'impose cette loi :
 Aussi bien, que crois-tu que t'accorde le roi ?

CHIMÈNE

Il peut me refuser, mais je ne puis me taire. 1205

L'INFANTE

Pense bien, ma Chimène, à ce que tu veux faire.
 Adieu : tu pourras seule y songer à loisir.

CHIMÈNE

Après mon père mort, je n'ai point à choisir.

SCÈNE III

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, DON ARIAS, DON RODRIGUE,
DON SANCHE

DON FERNAND

Généreux héritier d'une illustre famille,
Qui fut toujours la gloire et l'appui de Castille, 1210
Race de tant d'aïeux en valeur signalés,
Que l'essai de la tienne a sitôt égalés,
Pour te récompenser ma force est trop petite ;
Et j'ai moins de pouvoir que tu n'as de mérite.
Le pays délivré d'un si rude ennemi, 1215
Mon sceptre dans ma main par la tienne affermi,
Et les Mores défaits, avant qu'en ces alarmes
J'eusse pu donner ordre à repousser leurs armes,
Ne sont point des exploits qui laissent à ton roi
Le moyen ni l'espoir de s'acquitter vers toi. 1220
Mais deux rois tes captifs feront ta récompense.
Ils t'ont nommé tous deux leur Cid en ma présence :
Puisque Cid en leur langue est autant que seigneur,
Je ne t'envierai pas ce beau titre d'honneur.

Sois désormais le Cid : qu'à ce grand nom tout cède ; 1225
Qu'il comble d'épouvante et Grenade et Tolède,
Et qu'il marque à tous ceux qui vivent sous mes lois
Et ce que tu me vaux, et ce que je te dois.

DON RODRIGUE

Que Votre Majesté, Sire, épargne ma honte.
D'un si faible service elle fait trop de compte, 1230
Et me force à rougir devant un si grand roi
De mériter si peu l'honneur que j'en reçois.
Je sais trop que je dois au bien de votre empire,

Et le sang qui m'anime, et l'air que je respire ;
Et quand je les perdrai pour un si digne objet,
Je ferai seulement le devoir d'un sujet. 1235

DON FERNAND

Tous ceux que ce devoir à mon service engage
Ne s'en acquittent pas avec même courage ;
Et lorsque la valeur ne va point dans l'excès,
Elle ne produit point de si rares succès. 1240
Souffre donc qu'on te loue, et de cette victoire
Apprends-moi plus au long la véritable histoire.

DON RODRIGUE

Sire, vous avez su qu'en ce danger pressant,
Qui jeta dans la ville un effroi si puissant,
Une troupe d'amis chez mon père assemblée
Sollicita mon âme encor toute troublée. . . . 1245
Mais, Sire, pardonnez à ma témérité,
Si j'osai l'employer sans votre autorité :
Le péril approchait ; leur brigade était prête ;
Me montrant à la cour, je hasardais ma tête ; 1250
Et s'il fallait la perdre, il m'était bien plus doux
De sortir de la vie en combattant pour vous.

DON FERNAND

J'excuse ta chaleur à venger ton offense ;
Et l'État défendu me parle en ta défense :
Crois que dorénavant Chimène a beau parler,
Je ne l'écoute plus que pour la consoler. 1255
Mais poursuis.

DON RODRIGUE

Sous moi donc cette troupe s'avance,
Et porte sur le front une mâle assurance.

Nous partîmes cinq cents ; mais par un prompt renfort
 Nous nous vîmes trois mille en arrivant au port, 1260
 Tant, à nous voir marcher avec un tel visage,
 Les plus épouvantés reprenaient de courage !
 J'en cache les deux tiers, aussitôt qu'arrivés,
 Dans le fond des vaisseaux qui lors furent trouvés ;
 Le reste, dont le nombre augmentait à toute heure, 1265
 Brûlant d'impatience autour de moi demeure,
 Se couche contre terre, et sans faire aucun bruit,
 Passe une bonne part d'une si belle nuit.
 Par mon commandement la garde en fait de même,
 Et se tenant cachée, aide à mon stratagème ; 1270
 Et je feins hardiment d'avoir reçu de vous
 L'ordre qu'on me voit suivre et que je donne à tous.
 Cette obscure clarté qui tombe des étoiles
 Enfin avec le flux nous fait voir trente voiles ;
 L'onde s'enfle dessous, et d'un commun effort 1275
 Les Mores et la mer montent jusques au port.
 On les laisse passer ; tout leur paraît tranquille ;
 Point de soldats au port, point aux murs de la ville.
 Notre profond silence abusant leurs esprits,
 Ils n'osent plus douter de nous avoir surpris ; 1280
 Ils abordent sans peur, ils ancrent, ils descendent,
 Et courent se livrer aux mains qui les attendent.
 Nous nous levons alors, et tous en même temps
 Poussons jusques au ciel mille cris éclatants.
 Les nôtres, à ces cris, de nos vaisseaux répondent ; 1285
 Ils paraissent armés, les Mores se confondent,
 L'épouvante les prend à demi descendus ;
 Avant que de combattre, ils s'estiment perdus.
 Ils couraient au pillage, et rencontrent la guerre ;
 Nous les pressons sur l'eau, nous les pressons sur terre, 1290
Et nous faisons courir des ruisseaux de leur sang,

Avant qu'aucun résiste, ou reprenne son rang.
 Mais bientôt, malgré nous, leurs princes les rallient ;
 Leur courage renaît, et leurs terreurs s'oublient :
 La honte de mourir sans avoir combattu 1295
 Arrête leur désordre, et leur rend leur vertu.
 Contre nous de pied ferme ils tirent leurs alfanges,
 De notre sang au leur font d'horribles mélanges ;
 Et la terre, et le fleuve, et leur flotte, et le port,
 Sont des champs de carnage où triomphe la mort. 1300
 O combien d'actions, combien d'exploits célèbres
 Sont demeurés sans gloire au milieu des ténèbres,
 Où chacun, seul témoin des grands coups qu'il donnait,
 Ne pouvait discerner où le sort inclinait !
 J'allais de tous côtés encourager les nôtres, 1305
 Faire avancer les uns, et soutenir les autres,
 Ranger ceux qui venaient, les pousser à leur tour,
 Et ne l'ai pu savoir jusques au point du jour.
 Mais enfin sa clarté montre notre avantage :
 Le More voit sa perte, et perd soudain courage ; 1310
 Et voyant un renfort qui nous vient secourir,
 L'ardeur de vaincre cède à la peur de mourir.
 Ils gagnent leurs vaisseaux, ils en coupent les câbles,
 Poussent jusques aux cieus des cris épouvantables,
 Font retraite en tumulte, et sans considérer 1315
 Si leurs rois avec eux peuvent se retirer.
 Pour souffrir ce devoir leur frayeur est trop forte :
 Le flux les apporta ; le reflux les remporte,
 Cependant que leurs rois, engagés parmi nous,
 Et quelque peu des leurs, tous percés de nos coups, 1320
 Disputent vaillamment et vendent bien leur vie.
 A se rendre moi-même en vain je les convie :
 Le cimeterre au poing ils ne m'écoutent pas ;
 Mais voyant à leurs pieds tomber tous leurs soldats,

Et que seuls désormais en vain ils se défendent, 1325
Ils demandent le chef : je me nomme, ils se rendent.
Je vous les envoyai tous deux en même temps ;
Et le combat cessa faute de combattants.
C'est de cette façon que, pour votre service . . .

SCÈNE IV

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, DON RODRIGUE, DON ARIAS,
DON ALONSE, DON SANCHE

DON ALONSE

Sire, Chimène vient vous demander justice. 1330

DON FERNAND

La fâcheuse nouvelle, et l'importun devoir !
Va, je ne la veux pas obliger à te voir,
Pour tous remerciements il faut que je te chasse ;
Mais avant que sortir, viens, que ton roi t'embrasse.
(Don Rodrigue rentre)

DON DIÈGUE

Chimène le poursuit, et voudrait le sauver. 1335

DON FERNAND

On m'a dit qu'elle l'aime, et je vais l'éprouver.
Montrez un œil plus triste.

SCÈNE V

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, DON ARIAS, DON SANCHE,
DON ALONSE, CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

DON FERNAND

Enfin soyez contente,
Chimène, le succès répond à votre attente :
Si de nos ennemis Rodrigue a le dessus,
Il est mort à nos yeux des coups qu'il a reçus ; 1340
Rendez grâces au ciel, qui vous en a vengée.

(A don Diègue)

Voyez comme déjà sa couleur est changée.

DON DIÈGUE

Mais voyez qu'elle pâme, et d'un amour parfait,
Dans cette pâmoison, Sire, admirez l'effet.
Sa douleur a trahi les secrets de son âme, 1345
Et ne vous permet plus de douter de sa flamme.

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! Rodrigue est donc mort ?

DON FERNAND

Non, non, il voit le jour,
Et te conserve encore un immuable amour :
Calme cette douleur qui pour lui s'intéresse.

CHIMÈNE

Sire, on pâme de joie, ainsi que de tristesse : 1350
Un excès de plaisir nous rend tous languissants,
Et quand il surprend l'âme, il accable les sens.

DON FERNAND

Tu veux qu'en ta faveur nous croyions l'impossible ?
Chimène, ta douleur a paru trop visible.

CHIMÈNE

Eh bien ! Sire, ajoutez ce comble à mon malheur, 1355
Nommez ma pâmoison l'effet de ma douleur :
Un juste déplaisir à ce point m'a réduite.
Son trépas dérobait sa tête à ma poursuite ;
S'il meurt des coups reçus pour le bien du pays,
Ma vengeance est perdue et mes desseins trahis : 1360
Une si belle fin m'est trop injurieuse.
Je demande sa mort, mais non pas glorieuse,
Non pas dans un éclat qui l'élève si haut,
Non pas au lit d'honneur, mais sur un échafaud ;
Qu'il meure pour mon père, et non pour la patrie ; 1365
Que son nom soit taché, sa mémoire flétrie.
Mourir pour le pays n'est pas un triste sort ;
C'est s'immortaliser par une belle mort.

J'aime donc sa victoire, et je le puis sans crime ;
Elle assure l'État, et me rend ma victime, 1370
Mais noble, mais fameuse entre tous les guerriers,
Le chef, au lieu de fleurs, couronné de lauriers ;
Et pour dire en un mot ce que j'en considère,
Digne d'être immolée aux mânes de mon père . . .

Hélas ! à quel espoir me laissé-je emporter ! 1375
Rodrigue de ma part n'a rien à redouter :
Que pourraient contre lui des larmes qu'on méprise ?
Pour lui tout votre empire est un lieu de franchise ;
Là, sous votre pouvoir, tout lui devient permis ;
Il triomphe de moi comme des ennemis. 1380
Dans leur sang répandu la justice étouffée

Aux crimes du vainqueur sert d'un nouveau trophée :

Nous en croissons la pompe, et le mépris des lois
Nous fait suivre son char au milieu de deux rois.

DON FERNAND

Ma fille, ces transports ont trop de violence. 1385
Quand on rend la justice, on met tout en balance :
On a tué ton père, il était l'agresseur ;
Et la même équité m'ordonne la douceur.
Avant que d'accuser ce que j'en fais paraître,
Consulte bien ton cœur : Rodrigue en est le maître, 1390
Et ta flamme en secret rend grâce à ton roi,
Dont la faveur conserve un tel amant pour toi.

CHIMÈNE

Pour moi ! mon ennemi ! l'objet de ma colère !
L'auteur de mes malheurs ! l'assassin de mon père !
De ma juste poursuite on fait si peu de cas 1395
Qu'on me croit obliger en ne m'écoulant pas !
Puisque vous refusez la justice à mes larmes,
Sire, permettez-moi de recourir aux armes ;
C'est par là seulement qu'il a su m'outrager,
Et c'est aussi par là que je me dois venger. 1400
A tous vos cavaliers je demande sa tête :
Oui, qu'un d'eux me l'apporte, et je suis sa conquête ;
Qu'ils le combattent, Sire ; et le combat fini,
J'épouse le vainqueur, si Rodrigue est puni.
Sous votre autorité souffrez qu'on le publie. 1405

DON FERNAND

Cette vieille coutume en ces lieux établie,
Sous couleur de punir un injuste attentat,
Des meilleurs combattants affaiblit un État ;
Souvent de cet abus le succès déplorable
Opprime l'innocent, et soutient le coupable. 1410

J'en dispense Rodrigue : il m'est trop précieux
Pour l'exposer aux coups d'un sort capricieux ;
Et quoi qu'ait pu commettre un cœur si magnanime,
Les Mores en fuyant ont emporté son crime.

DON DIÈGUE

Quoi ! Sire, pour lui seul vous renversez des lois
Qu'a vu toute la cour observer tant de fois !
Que croira votre peuple, et que dira l'envie,
Si sous votre défense il ménage sa vie,
Et s'en fait un prétexte à ne paraître pas
Où tous les gens d'honneur cherchent un beau trépas ?
De pareilles faveurs terniraient trop sa gloire :
Qu'il goûte sans rougir les fruits de sa victoire.
Le comte eut de l'audace ; il l'en a su punir :
Il l'a fait en brave homme, et le doit maintenir.

DON FERNAND

Puisque vous le voulez, j'accorde qu'il le fasse ;
Mais d'un guerrier vaincu mille prendraient la place,
Et le prix que Chimène au vainqueur a promis
De tous mes cavaliers ferait ses ennemis.
L'opposer seul à tous serait trop d'injustice :
Il suffit qu'une fois il entre dans la lice.

Choisis qui tu voudras, Chimène, et choisis bien ;
Mais après ce combat ne demande plus rien.

DON DIÈGUE

N'excusez point par là ceux que son bras étonne :
Laissez un champ ouvert, où n'entrera personne.
Après ce que Rodrigue a fait voir aujourd'hui,
Quel courage assez vain s'oserait prendre à lui ?
Qui se hasarderait contre un tel adversaire ?
Qui serait ce vaillant, ou bien ce téméraire ?

DON SANCHE

Faites ouvrir le champ : vous voyez l'assaillant ;
Je suis ce téméraire, ou plutôt ce vaillant.

1440

Accordez cette grâce à l'ardeur qui me presse,
Madame : vous savez quelle est votre promesse.

DON FERNAND

Chimène, remets-tu ta querelle en sa main ?

CHIMÈNE

Sire, je l'ai promis.

DON FERNAND

Soyez prêt à demain.

DON DIÈGUE

Non, Sire, il ne faut pas différer davantage :
On est toujours trop prêt quand on a du courage.

1445

DON FERNAND

Sortir d'une bataille, et combattre à l'instant !

DON DIÈGUE

Rodrigue a pris haleine en vous la racontant.

DON FERNAND

Du moins une heure ou deux je veux qu'il se délasse.

Mais de peur qu'en exemple un tel combat ne passe,

1450

Pour témoigner à tous qu'à regret je permets

Un sanglant procédé qui ne me plut jamais,

De moi ni de ma cour il n'aura la présence.

(Il parle à don Arias)

Vous seul des combattants jugerez la vaillance :

Ayez soin que tous deux fassent en gens de cœur,

1455

Et le combat fini, m'amenez le vainqueur.

Quel qu'il soit, même prix est acquis à sa peine :
Je le veux de ma main présenter à Chimène,
Et que pour récompense il reçoive sa foi.

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! Sire, m'imposer une si dure loi !

DON FERNAND

Tu t'en plains ; mais ton feu, loin d'avouer ta plainte,
Si Rodrigue est vainqueur, l'accepte sans contrainte.
Cesse de murmurer contre un arrêt si doux ;
Qui que ce soit des deux, j'en ferai ton époux.

ACTE V

SCÈNE PREMIÈRE

DON RODRIGUE, CHIMÈNE

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! Rodrigue, en plein jour ! d'où te vient cette audace ?
Va, tu me perds d'honneur ; retire-toi, de grâce. 1466

DON RODRIGUE

Je vais mourir, Madame, et vous viens en ce lieu,
Avant le coup mortel, dire un dernier adieu :
Cet immuable amour qui sous vos lois m'engage
N'ose accepter ma mort sans vous en faire hommage. 1470

CHIMÈNE

Tu vas mourir !

DON RODRIGUE

Je cours à ces heureux moments
Qui vont livrer ma vie à vos ressentiments.

CHIMÈNE

Tu vas mourir ! Don Sanche est-il si redoutable
Qu'il donne l'épouvante à ce cœur indomptable ?
Qui t'a rendu si faible, ou qui le rend si fort ? 1475
Rodrigue va combattre, et se croit déjà mort !
Celui qui n'a pas craint les Mores, ni mon père,
Va combattre don Sanche, et déjà désespère !
Ainsi donc au besoin ton courage s'abat !

DON RODRIGUE

Je cours à mon supplice, et non pas au combat ; 1480
 Et ma fidèle ardeur sait bien m'ôter l'envie,
 Quand vous cherchez ma mort, de défendre ma vie.

J'ai toujours même cœur ; mais je n'ai point de bras
 Quand il faut conserver ce qui ne vous plaît pas ;
 Et déjà cette nuit m'aurait été mortelle, 1485
 Si j'eusse combattu pour ma seule querelle ;
 Mais défendant mon roi, son peuple et mon pays,
 A me défendre mal je les aurais trahis.
 Mon esprit généreux ne hait pas tant la vie,
 Qu'il en veuille sortir par une perfidie. 1490
 Maintenant qu'il s'agit de mon seul intérêt,
 Vous demandez ma mort, j'en accepte l'arrêt,
 Votre ressentiment choisit la main d'un autre
 (Je ne méritais pas de mourir de la vôtre) :
 On ne me verra point en repousser les coups ; 1495
 Je dois plus de respect à qui combat pour vous ;
 Et ravi de penser que c'est de vous qu'ils viennent,
 Puisque c'est votre honneur que ses armes soutiennent,
 Je vais lui présenter mon estomac ouvert,
 Adorant en sa main la vôtre qui me perd. 1500

CHIMÈNE

Si d'un triste devoir la juste violence,
 Qui me fait malgré moi poursuivre ta vaillance,
 Prescrit à ton amour une si forte loi
 Qu'il te rend sans défense à qui combat pour moi,
 En cet aveuglement ne perds pas la mémoire 1505
 Qu'ainsi que de ta vie il y va de ta gloire,
 Et que dans quelque éclat que Rodrigue ait vécu,
 Quand on le saura mort, on le croira vaincu.
Ton honneur t'est plus cher que je ne te suis chère,

Puisqu'il trempe tes mains dans le sang de mon père,
 Et te fait renoncer, malgré ta passion,
 A l'espoir le plus doux de ma possession :
 Je t'en vois cependant faire si peu de compte,
 Que sans rendre combat tu veux qu'on te surmonte.
 Quelle inégalité ravale ta vertu ? 1515
 Pourquoi ne l'as-tu plus, ou pourquoi l'avais-tu ?
 Quoi ? n'es-tu généreux que pour me faire outrage ?
 S'il ne faut m'offenser, n'as-tu point de courage ?
 Et traites-tu mon père avec tant de rigueur,
 Qu'après l'avoir vaincu tu souffres un vainqueur ? 1520
 Va, sans vouloir mourir, laisse-moi te poursuivre,
 Et défends ton honneur, si tu ne veux plus vivre.

DON RODRIGUE

Après la mort du comte, et les Mores défaits,
 Faudrait-il à ma gloire encor d'autres effets ?
 Elle peut dédaigner le soin de me défendre : 1525
 On sait que mon courage ose tout entreprendre,
 Que ma valeur peut tout, et que dessous les cieux,
 Auprès de mon honneur, rien ne m'est précieux.
 Non, non, en ce combat, quoi que vous veuillez croire,
 Rodrigue peut mourir sans hasarder sa gloire, 1530
 Sans qu'on l'ose accuser d'avoir manqué de cœur,
 Sans passer pour vaincu, sans souffrir un vainqueur.
 On dira seulement : « Il adorait Chimène ;
 Il n'a pas voulu vivre et mériter sa haine ;
 Il a cédé lui-même à la rigueur du sort 1535
 Qui forçait sa maîtresse à poursuivre sa mort :
 Elle voulait sa tête ; et son cœur magnanime,
 S'il l'en eût refusée, eût pensé faire un crime.
 Pour venger son honneur il perdit son amour,
 Pour venger sa maîtresse il a quitté le jour, 1540

Préférant, quelque espoir qu'eût son âme asservie,
Son honneur à Chimène, et Chimène à sa vie. »
Ainsi donc vous verrez ma mort en ce combat,
Loin d'obscurcir ma gloire, en rehausser l'éclat ;
Et cet honneur suivra mon trépas volontaire
Que tout autre que moi n'eût pu vous satisfaire.

CHIMÈNE

Puisque, pour t'empêcher de courir au trépas,
Ta vie et ton honneur sont de faibles appas,
Si jamais je t'aimai, cher Rodrigue, en revanche,
Défends-toi maintenant pour m'ôter à don Sanche ;
Combats pour m'affranchir d'une condition
Qui me donne à l'objet de mon aversion.
Te dirai-je encor plus ? va, songe à ta défense,
Pour forcer mon devoir, pour m'imposer silence ;
Et si tu sens pour moi ton cœur encore épris,
Sors vainqueur d'un combat dont Chimène est le prix.
Adieu : ce mot lâché me fait rougir de honte.

DON RODRIGUE

Est-il quelque ennemi qu'à présent je ne dompte ?
Paraissez, Navarrais, Mores et Castellans,
Et tout ce que l'Espagne a nourri de vaillants ;
Unissez-vous ensemble, et faites une armée,
Pour combattre une main de la sorte animée :
Joignez tous vos efforts contre un espoir si doux ;
Pour en venir à bout, c'est trop peu que de vous.

SCÈNE II

L'INFANTE

T'écouterai-je encor, respect de ma naissance,
Qui fais un crime de mes feux ?

T'écouterai-je, amour, dont la douce puissance
Contre ce fier tyran fait révolter mes vœux ?

Pauvre princesse, auquel des deux

Dois-tu prêter obéissance ?

1570

Rodrigue, ta valeur te rend digne de moi ;

Mais pour être vaillant, tu n'es pas fils de roi.

Impitoyable sort, dont la rigueur sépare

Ma gloire d'avec mes désirs !

Est-il dit que le choix d'une vertu si rare

1575

Coûte à ma passion de si grands déplaisirs ?

O cieux ! a combien de soupirs

Faut-il que mon cœur se prépare,

Si jamais il n'obtient sur un si long tourment

Ni d'éteindre l'amour, ni d'accepter l'amant ?

1580

Mais c'est trop de scrupule, et ma raison s'étonne

Du mépris d'un si digne choix :

Bien qu'aux monarques seuls ma naissance me donne,

Rodrigue, avec honneur je vivrai sous tes lois.

Après avoir vaincu deux rois,

1585

Pourrais-tu manquer de couronne ?

Et ce grand nom de Cid que tu viens de gagner

Ne fait-il pas trop voir sur qui tu dois régner ?

Il est digne de moi, mais il est à Chimène ;

Le don que j'en ai fait me nuit.

1590

Entre eux la mort d'un père a si peu mis de haine,

Que le devoir du sang à regret le poursuit :

Ainsi n'espérons aucun fruit

De son crime, ni de ma peine,

Puisque pour me punir le destin a permis

1595

Que l'amour dure même entre deux ennemis.

SCÈNE III

L'INFANTE, LÉONOR

L'INFANTE

Où viens-tu, Léonor ?

LÉONOR

Vous applaudir, Madame,
Sur le repos qu'enfin a retrouvé votre âme.

L'INFANTE

D'où viendrait ce repos dans un comble d'ennui ?

LÉONOR

Si l'amour vit d'espoir, et s'il meurt avec lui, 1600
Rodrigue ne peut plus charmer votre courage.
Vous savez le combat où Chimène l'engage :
Puisqu'il faut qu'il y meure, ou qu'il soit son mari,
Votre espérance est morte, et votre esprit guéri.

L'INFANTE

Ah ! qu'il s'en faut encor !

LÉONOR

Que pouvez-vous prétendre ? 1605

L'INFANTE

Mais plutôt quel espoir me pourrais-tu défendre ?
Si Rodrigue combat sous ces conditions,
Pour en rompre l'effet, j'ai trop d'inventions.
L'amour, ce doux auteur de mes cruels supplices,
Aux esprits des amants apprend trop d'artifices. 1610

LÉONOR

Pourrez-vous quelque chose, après qu'un père mort
N'a pu dans leurs esprits allumer de discord ?

Car Chimène aisément montre par sa conduite
 Que la haine aujourd'hui ne fait pas sa poursuite.
 Elle obtient un combat, et pour son combattant 1615
 C'est le premier offert qu'elle accepte à l'instant :
 Elle n'a point recours à ces mains généreuses
 Que tant d'exploits fameux rendent si glorieuses ;
 Don Sanche lui suffit, et mérite son choix,
 Parce qu'il va s'armer pour la première fois. 1620
 Elle aime en ce duel son peu d'expérience ;
 Comme il est sans renom, elle est sans défiance ;
 Et sa facilité vous doit bien faire voir
 Qu'elle cherche un combat qui force son devoir,
 Qui livre à son Rodrigue une victoire aisée, 1625
 Et l'autorise enfin à paraître apaisée.

L'INFANTE

Je le remarque assez, et toutefois mon cœur
 A l'envi de Chimène adore ce vainqueur.
 A quoi me résoudrai-je, amante infortunée ?

LÉONOR

A vous mieux souvenir de qui vous êtes née : 1630
 Le ciel vous doit un roi, vous aimez un sujet !

L'INFANTE

Mon inclination a bien changé d'objet.
 Je n'aime plus Rodrigue, un simple gentilhomme ;
 Non, ce n'est plus ainsi que mon amour le nomme :
 Si j'aime, c'est l'auteur de tant de beaux exploits, 1635
 C'est le valeureux Cid, le maître de deux rois.

Je me vaincrai pourtant, non de peur d'aucun blâme,
 Mais pour ne troubler pas une si belle flamme ;
 Et quand pour m'obliger on l'aurait couronné,
 Je ne veux point reprendre un bien que j'ai donné. 1640

Puisqu'en un tel combat sa victoire est certaine,
 Allons encore un coup le donner à Chimène.
 Et toi, qui vois les traits dont mon cœur est percé,
 Viens me voir achever comme j'ai commencé.

SCÈNE IV

CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

CHIMÈNE

Elvire, que je souffre, et que je suis à plaindre ! 164
 Je ne sais qu'espérer, et je vois tout à craindre ;
 Aucun vœu ne m'échappe où j'ose consentir ;
 Je ne souhaite rien sans un prompt repentir.
 A deux rivaux pour moi je fais prendre les armes :
 Le plus heureux succès me coûtera des larmes ; 165
 Et quoi qu'en ma faveur en ordonne le sort,
 Mon père est sans vengeance, ou mon amant est mort.

ELVIRE

D'un et d'autre côté je vous vois soulagée :
 Ou vous avez Rodrigue, ou vous êtes vengée ;
 Et quoi que le destin puisse ordonner de vous, 165
 Il soutient votre gloire, et vous donne un époux.

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ! l'objet de ma haine ou de tant de colère !
 L'assassin de Rodrigue ou celui de mon père !
 De tous les deux côtés on me donne un mari
 Encor tout teint du sang que j'ai le plus chéri ; 166
 De tous les deux côtés mon âme se rebelle :
 Je crains plus que la mort la fin de ma querelle.
 Allez, vengeance, amour, qui troublez mes esprits,
Vous n'avez point pour moi de douceurs à ce prix ;

Et toi, puissant moteur du destin qui m'outrage, 1665
Termine ce combat sans aucun avantage,
Sans faire aucun des deux ni vaincu ni vainqueur.

ELVIRE

Ce serait vous traiter avec trop de rigueur.
Ce combat pour votre âme est un nouveau supplice,
S'il vous laisse obligée à demander justice, 1670
A témoigner toujours ce haut ressentiment,
Et poursuivre toujours la mort de votre amant.
Madame, il vaut bien mieux que sa rare vaillance,
Lui couronnant le front, vous impose silence ;
Que la loi du combat étouffe vos soupirs, 1675
Et que le roi vous force à suivre vos désirs.

CHIMÈNE

Quand il sera vainqueur, crois-tu que je me rende ?
Mon devoir est trop fort, et ma perte trop grande ;
Et ce n'est pas assez pour leur faire la loi,
Que celle du combat et le vouloir du roi. 1680
Il peut vaincre don Sanche avec fort peu de peine,
Mais non pas avec lui la gloire de Chimène ;
Et quoi qu'à sa victoire un monarque ait promis,
Mon honneur lui fera mille autres ennemis.

ELVIRE

Gardez, pour vous punir de cet orgueil étrange, 1685
Que le ciel à la fin ne souffre qu'on vous venge.
Quoi ! vous voulez encor refuser le bonheur
De pouvoir maintenant vous taire avec honneur ?
Que prétend ce devoir, et qu'est-ce qu'il espère ?
La mort de votre amant vous rendra-t-elle un père ? 1690
Est-ce trop peu pour vous que d'un coup de malheur ?
Faut-il perte sur perte, et douleur sur douleur ?

Allez, dans le caprice où votre humeur s'obstine,
 Vous ne méritez pas l'amant qu'on vous destine ;
 Et nous verrons du ciel l'équitable courroux
 Vous laisser, par sa mort, don Sanche pour époux.

1695

CHIMÈNE

Elvire, c'est assez des peines que j'endure,
 Ne les redouble point de ce funeste augure.
 Je veux, si je le puis, les éviter tous deux ;
 Sinon, en ce combat Rodrigue a tous mes vœux :
 Non qu'une folle ardeur de son côté me penche ;
 Mais s'il était vaincu, je serais à don Sanche :
 Cette appréhension fait naître mon souhait.
 Que vois-je, malheureuse ? Elvire, c'en est fait.

1700

SCÈNE V

DON SANCHE, CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

DON SANCHE

Obligé d'apporter à vos pieds cette épée . . .

1705

CHIMÈNE

Quoi ? du sang de Rodrigue encor toute trempée ?
 Perfide, oses-tu bien te montrer à mes yeux,
 Après m'avoir ôté ce que j'aimais le mieux ?

Éclate, mon amour, tu n'as plus rien à craindre :
 Mon père est satisfait, cesse de te contraindre.
 Un même coup a mis ma gloire en sûreté,
 Mon âme au désespoir, ma flamme en liberté.

1710

DON SANCHE

D'un esprit plus rassis . . .

CHIMÈNE

Tu me parles encore,
Exécration assassin d'un héros que j'adore ?

Va, tu l'as pris en traître ; un guerrier si vaillant 1715
N'eût jamais succombé sous un tel assaillant.
N'espère rien de moi, tu ne m'as point servie :
En croyant me venger, tu m'as ôté la vie.

DON SANCHE

Étrange impression, qui loin de m'écouter . . .

CHIMÈNE

Veux-tu que de sa mort je t'écoute vanter, 1720
Que j'entende à loisir avec quelle insolence
Tu peindras son malheur, mon crime et ta vaillance ?

SCÈNE VI

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, DON ARIAS, DON SANCHE,
DON ALONSE, CHIMÈNE, ELVIRE

CHIMÈNE

Sire, il n'est plus besoin de vous dissimuler
Ce que tous mes efforts ne vous ont pu celer.
J'aimais, vous l'avez su ; mais pour venger mon père, 1725
J'ai bien voulu proscrire une tête si chère :
Votre Majesté, Sire, elle-même a pu voir
Comme j'ai fait céder mon amour au devoir.
Enfin Rodrigue est mort, et sa mort m'a changée
D'implacable ennemie en amante affligée. 1730
J'ai dû cette vengeance à qui m'a mise au jour,
Et je dois maintenant ces pleurs à mon amour.
Don Sanche m'a perdue en prenant ma défense,
Et du bras qui me perd je suis la récompense !
Sire, si la pitié peut émouvoir un roi, 1735
De grâce, révoquez une si dure loi ;
Pour prix d'une victoire où je perds ce que j'aime,
Je lui laisse mon bien ; qu'il me laisse à moi-même ;

Qu'en un cloître sacré je pleure incessamment,
Jusqu'au dernier soupir, mon père et mon amant.

DON DIÈGUE

Enfin elle aime, Sire, et ne croit plus un crime
D'avouer par sa bouche un amour légitime.

DON FERNAND

Chimène, sors d'erreur, ton amant n'est pas mort,
Et don Sanche vaincu t'a fait un faux rapport.

DON SANCHE

Sire, un peu trop d'ardeur malgré moi l'a déçue :
Je venais du combat lui raconter l'issue.
Ce généreux guerrier, dont son cœur est charmé :
« Ne crains rien, m'a-t-il dit, quand il m'a désarmé ;
Je laisserais plutôt la victoire incertaine,
Que de répandre un sang hasardé pour Chimène ;
Mais puisque mon devoir m'appelle auprès du roi,
Va de notre combat l'entretenir pour moi,
De la part du vainqueur lui porter ton épée. »
Sire, j'y suis venu : cet objet l'a trompée ;
Elle m'a cru vainqueur, me voyant de retour,
Et soudain sa colère a trahi son amour
Avec tant de transport et tant d'impatience,
Que je n'ai pu gagner un moment d'audience.

Pour moi, bien que vaincu, je me répute heureux ;
Et malgré l'intérêt de mon cœur amoureux,
Perdant infiniment, j'aime encore ma défaite,
Qui fait le beau succès d'une amour si parfaite.

DON FERNAND

Ma fille, il ne faut point rougir d'un si beau feu,
Ni chercher les moyens d'en faire un désaveu.

Une louable honte en vain t'en sollicite : 176
 Ta gloire est dégagée, et ton devoir est quitte ;
 Ton père est satisfait, et c'était le venger
 Que mettre tant de fois ton Rodrigue en danger.
 Tu vois comme le ciel autrement en dispose.
 Ayant tant fait pour lui, fais pour toi quelque chose, 177
 Et ne sois point rebelle à mon commandement,
 Qui te donne un époux aimé si chèrement.

SCÈNE VII

DON FERNAND, DON DIÈGUE, DON RODRIGUE, DON ALONSE
 DON SANCHE, L'INFANTE, CHIMÈNE, LÉONOR, ELVIRE

L'INFANTE

Sèche tes pleurs, Chimène, et reçois sans tristesse
 Ce généreux vainqueur des mains de ta princesse.

DON RODRIGUE

Ne vous offensez point, Sire, si devant vous 177
 Un respect amoureux me jette à ses genoux.
 Je ne viens point ici demander ma conquête :
 Je viens tout de nouveau vous apporter ma tête,
 Madame ; mon amour n'emploiera point pour moi
 Ni la loi du combat, ni le vouloir du roi. 178
 Si tout ce qui s'est fait est trop peu pour un père,
 Dites par quels moyens il vous faut satisfaire.
 Faut-il combattre encor mille et mille rivaux,
 Aux deux bouts de la terre étendre mes travaux,
 Forcer moi seul un camp, mettre en fuite une armée, 179
 Des héros fabuleux passer la renommée ?
 Si mon crime par là se peut enfin laver,
 J'ose tout entreprendre, et puis tout achever ;

Mais si ce fier honneur, toujours inexorable,
Ne se peut apaiser sans la mort du coupable,
N'armez plus contre moi le pouvoir des humains :
Ma tête est à vos pieds, vengez-vous par vos mains ;
Vos mains seules ont droit de vaincre un invincible ;
Prenez une vengeance à tout autre impossible.
Mais du moins que ma mort suffise à me punir :
Ne me bannissez point de votre souvenir ;
Et puisque mon trépas conserve votre gloire,
Pour vous en revancher conservez ma mémoire,
Et dites quelquefois, en déplorant mon sort :
« S'il ne m'avait aimée, il ne serait pas mort. »

CHIMÈNE

Relève-toi, Rodrigue. Il faut l'avouer, Sire,
Je vous en ai trop dit pour m'en pouvoir dédire.
Rodrigue a des vertus que je ne puis haïr ;
Et quand un roi commande, on lui doit obéir.
Mais à quoi que déjà vous m'avez condamnée,
Pourrez-vous à vos yeux souffrir cet hyménée ?
Et quand de mon devoir vous voulez cet effort,
Toute votre justice en est-elle d'accord ?
Si Rodrigue à l'État devient si nécessaire,
De ce qu'il fait pour vous dois-je être le salaire,
Et me livrer moi-même au reproche éternel
D'avoir trempé mes mains dans le sang paternel ?

DON FERNAND

Le temps assez souvent a rendu légitime
Ce qui semblait d'abord ne se pouvoir sans crime :
Rodrigue t'a gagnée, et tu dois être à lui.
Mais quoique sa valeur t'ait conquise aujourd'hui,
Il faudrait que je fusse ennemi de ta gloire,
Pour lui donner sitôt le prix de sa victoire.

Cet hymen différé ne rompt point une loi
 Qui, sans marquer de temps, lui destine ta foi. 1820
 Prends un an, si tu veux, pour essuyer tes larmes.
 Rodrigue, cependant il faut prendre les armes.
 Après avoir vaincu les Mores sur nos bords,
 Renversé leurs desseins, repoussé leurs efforts,
 Va jusqu'en leur pays leur reporter la guerre, 1825
 Commander mon armée, et ravager leur terre :
 A ce seul nom de Cid ils trembleront d'effroi ;
 Ils t'ont nommé seigneur, et te voudront pour roi.
 Mais parmi tes hauts faits sois-lui toujours fidèle :
 Reviens-en, s'il se peut, encor plus digne d'elle ; 1830
 Et par tes grands exploits fais-toi si bien priser,
 Qu'il lui soit glorieux alors de t'épouser.

DON RODRIGUE

Pour posséder Chimène, et pour votre service,
 Que peut-on m'ordonner que mon bras n'accomplisse ?
 Quoi qu'absent de ses yeux il me faille endurer, 1835
 Sire, ce m'est trop d'heur de pouvoir espérer.

DON FERNAND

Espère en ton courage, espère en ma promesse ;
 Et possédant déjà le cœur de ta maîtresse,
 Pour vaincre un point d'honneur qui combat contre toi,
 Laisse faire le temps, ta vaillance et ton roi. 1840

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXAMEN

THE QUARREL OF THE CID

In the seventeenth century none of the present-day conditions for the emolument of dramatic poets existed. They merely received a certain share of the theater receipts from their plays as long as these remained in manuscript; a play in print became common property. As the theater-going public was relatively small, plays could not be presented for any extended length of time and the returns to the poets were correspondingly limited. Alexandre Hardy, who supplied one of the two Parisian theaters with six or seven hundred plays during the first thirty years of the century, was accustomed to receive only from three to five *écus*, that is four or five dollars, apiece. The most considerable part of the author's income was derived from the dedication of his play, when it appeared in print, to some noble lord or high official who as a rule responded with more or less liberality in the form of a gift, a pension, or a sinecure employment. Such a system could not but be prolific in cabals, intrigues, and personal jealousy.

When the "Cid" was presented Corneille already ranked as "one of the first" among upwards of a score of dramatic poets. Two of his most prominent rivals were Jean de Mairet and Georges de Scudéry. The prestige of the first of these was great. His "Sylvie" (1626), a pastoral play on the pattern of the Italian pastorals of Tasso and Guarini, had met with sensational success; and his reputation had taken on authority with his preface to the "Silvanire" (1630), in which he had presented the doctrine of the unities, and especially with the production of the "Sophonisbe" (1634), in which he, first of French dramatists, had observed them. Scudéry had made his *début* as a dramatic poet the same year (1629) as Corneille, and up to the date of the presentation of the "Cid" had produced the same number of

plays with about equal success. In the dramatic season of 1634-1635 the hitherto friendly rivalry of the three poets became more tense when the actors of the Théâtre du Marais presented the first effort of each in the composition of a tragedy upon classic models: the "Sophonisbe" of Mairet, the "Médée" of Corneille, and the "Mort de César" of Scudéry. Such an event could not fail to lead to much discussion and comparison, and hence to keener competition between the poets concerned. To this rivalry of poets there corresponded a rivalry of theaters. Mondory, the leading tragic actor of the time, had become the director of the Théâtre du Marais in 1629, and in the same year had given Corneille's first play, the "Mélite," which, according to the poet, established this new troupe of players in Paris. Under the leadership of the great actor this new theater became a very powerful competitor of the older and royally patronized theater of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, and even threatened to outstrip it. But about two years before the "Cid" a bit of royal favoritism caused six of Mondory's best actors to go over to the rival theater, and so still further intensified the rivalry inseparable from theatrical competition under any conditions.

Now it was at this juncture, while the theater of the Hôtel de Bourgogne was enjoying the temporary advantage afforded by the royal favor, that the "Cid" with its phenomenal success came to turn the scale and to restore to the Théâtre du Marais the advantage which it had lost. At the time the troupe of Bellerose was playing at the Hôtel de Bourgogne the "Amant libéral" of Scudéry. Under these conditions it was inevitable that the rivalry between the two poets should be brought to the highest pitch. Only a pretext was needed to precipitate a literary feud, and the pretext was not long wanting. Early in 1637, Corneille, replying to a friend who had asked him to compose some words (a chanson) to be set to music, wrote some verses entitled "Excuse à Ariste." After protesting his lack of ability to write the desired verses, he dwelt in no very modest terms upon his achievements as a dramatic poet. It has generally been admitted that his pride led him too far. But it may have been a very natural feeling of irritation. In 1636 Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac, one of the literary oracles of the time, had published a

collection of letters. Among these was one full of extravagant praise of the actor Mondory, in which he declared that such was the actor's art that "the grace with which he pronounces verses gives them a degree of beauty which they do not receive from the poets themselves," and that "whatever is faulty in them [the verses] takes on a semblance of good quality, and whatever is good is brought to perfection." It is certain that Corneille's rivals would not have let slip a chance to use this utterance against him, and, as a matter of fact, during the quarrel Mairet declared that it was precisely of the "Cid" that Balzac was thinking when he wrote these words. Corneille was doubtless thinking of all this when he wrote in his "Excuse": "I owe to myself alone all my renown." But he did not stop there. He declared that he had no rival to whom he did wrong in treating him as an equal. "I have few voices for me, but I have them without cabal, and my ambition to make a greater stir does not go in search of them from one social resort to another (*de réduit en réduit*); my work unsupported appears upon the stage and all the world freely blames or idolizes it." At the time when the poet wrote these words Mairet was pursuing this very method, according to Corneille's accusation made a little later during the heat of the quarrel. "If you sent your pieces from Besançon as Corneille sends his from Rouen, without interesting anybody in their success, you would fall very flat, and I am sure that whatever skill you may employ in setting off your translation of the 'Solyman' which has already been going the rounds of the ruelles for eighteen months, and which is being reserved for this winter, the noise of this important piece of battery will not make the 'Cid' beat a retreat." Scudéry on his side had two volumes in press: one containing "La Mort de César" and a collection of verses in praise of the king and Richelieu, to whom the play was dedicated; the other containing the "Didon," which had been rather unsuccessful, dedicated to the Comte de Belin, who was, after Richelieu, the most powerful patron of the theater in France. Such a transparent allusion could not fail to arouse the resentment of Corneille's rivals.

The storm broke forthwith. First some verses by Mairet entitled "The Author of the True Spanish 'Cid' to his French Translator upon a Letter in Verse which he has had printed with the title

'Excuse à Ariste,' in which, after a hundred vain expressions, he says, speaking of himself, 'I owe to myself alone all my renown.' The Spanish poet is represented as saying that Corneille must recognize that "the vainest spirit is often the most stupid, and that in fact you owe me all your renown." This was answered by a *rondeau* generally attributed to Corneille, containing a remonstrance couched in no very choice or gentle terms. Then came the "Observations sur le Cid" by Scudéry.

In this work, Scudéry counted on nothing less than the annihilation of his rival's masterpiece. He proposed to prove :

That its subject is worthless,

That it breaks the principal rules of the dramatic poem,

That it lacks judgment in its execution,

That it contains many poor verses, and

That nearly all the beauties it does contain have been pilfered.

The first act of a *tragi-comedy* ought to expose an *intrigue* which will hold the mind of the spectator in suspense until the end of the work. But in the "Cid" the father of Chimène dies almost at the beginning of the piece, and throughout Rodrigue and Chimène are actuated and can be actuated only by a single impulse, so there is no *intrigue* and no *suspense*; the least perspicacious spectator perceives from the beginning what the end of the adventure will be as soon as it is commenced. Therefore the subject is worthless for a *tragi-comedy*.

Of the principal rules of the dramatic poem the most fundamental is that which requires that the subject appear probable. For in this point alone the poet differs from the historian, who represents things as they are, while the former represents things as they well might be. Now it is true that, according to history, Chimène married the Cid; but it is not probable that a young woman of honor would marry the murderer of her father. "This event was good for the historian, but worthless for the poet. I do not believe that it is enough to make Chimène feel repugnance, to make duty combat love, to put in her mouth a thousand antitheses on this subject, nor to allege the intervention of a king; nevertheless all that does not prevent her from *making herself a parricide* when she resolves to marry her father's

murderer. And, although that is not immediately carried into effect, the will (which alone makes a marriage) is so evident that Chimène is a parricide after all." This subject, then, cannot be probable, and consequently breaks one of the principal rules of the poem. The "Cid" sins further in this respect by the great number of actions it contains. "To represent as having happened in twenty-four hours the death of a father and his daughter's promise of marriage to the one who has killed him — killed him not without recognizing him, not in a chance encounter, but in a duel in which he was the challenger — is (as a friend of mine very neatly put it) a thing which, far from being acceptable in twenty-four hours, would not be endurable in twenty-four years." And not only this, but "in the short space of one day a preceptor of the Prince of Castile is selected, a quarrel and combat take place between Don Diègue and the Count, another combat between Rodrigue and the Count, another between Rodrigue and the Moors, another between Rodrigue and Don Sanche, and a marriage between Rodrigue and Chimène is concluded." The rule of probability is not observed, although it is absolutely necessary. The "Cid" breaks still another and even more important rule in that it is contrary to good manners, i.e. to morals. "The theatrical poem was invented to instruct while amusing; philosophy disguises itself under this agreeable cloak for fear of appearing too austere to the eyes of the common people, and thus (we may say) it seems to sugar-coat the pill that it may be taken without repugnance, and that we may be cured almost without perceiving that we are taking the medicine. Accordingly it never fails to show virtue recompensed and vice punished. In the 'Cid,' on the contrary, we see an unnatural daughter speak only of her follies when she should speak only of her misfortune, lament over the loss of her lover when she should only think of the loss of her father, love that which she should abhor, endure at the same time and in the same house the murderer and the poor body of his victim, and, to put a climax to her crime, unite her hand to that of her lover still dripping with her father's blood." And after all this "a king caresses this shameless creature, her vice is rewarded, virtue seems banished from the conclusion of the poem; it is a lesson in evil-doing, a spur to drive us on to its committal." By

these remarkable and dangerous faults the "Cid" is directly opposed to the rules of the dramatic poem.

From this point Scudéry proceeds with what the Academy called the anatomy of the poem; that is to say, he examines the play act by act, scene by scene, to discover faults in execution. The characters are not what they should be. Fernand should have been a greater statesman, Urrique (the Infante) of loftier aspirations, Don Gomès (the Count) less ambitious and less insolent, Don Sanche more magnanimous, and Elvire of better example to ladies' attendants. He condemns the Infante's part, which was created only to give employment to the actress Beauchâteau, and he finds Don Arias almost equally superfluous. He is horrified over the scenes in which Rodrigue seeks Chimène in her house; they are contrary, furthermore, to common sense — how could he have got there without being seen and prevented by people of her suite? Strange too is this assembly of five hundred nobles at Don Diègue's, especially in so small a kingdom: the whole is merely a transparent device of the author to give Rodrigue a company with which to fight the Moors. The lack of precautions taken by the king to guard Seville is contrary to what might be expected from any king; besides, as a usual thing harbors are guarded by a chain stretched across the entrance, which makes the whole story of the attack of the Moors seem very improbable. The trick played upon Chimène by the king in feigning the death of Rodrigue is beneath the dignity of tragedy, and his command that she marry the victor of the combat between her lover and Don Sanche is utterly unjust. In the fifth act, while 140 verses are being recited the author has Rodrigue go and arm himself at his house, go to the place of the combat, fight, be victor, disarm Don Sanche, give him back his sword, order him to carry it to Chimène, and Don Sanche comes from the place of combat into Chimène's presence — all of which is absolutely impossible; it must be considered a grave fault of execution. And then how improbable that in the deluge of words which Chimène addresses to Don Sanche the latter should not have had time to acquaint her of her error! Besides, the management of the theater is so awkwardly handled that for the greater part of the time the spectator has no idea where the actors are.

After the criticism of these and lesser details Scudéry proceeds to examine the verses. The method is the same, consisting for the most part in quibbles:

"L'heure à présent m'appelle au conseil qui s'assemble.

"This expression à *présent* is too common for verse, it was enough to say 'The hour summons me to the council.' The 'which is assembling' is superfluous.

"Le prince pour essai de générosité.

"The words *essai* and *générosité*, being so near together, make a false rime, which is very disagreeable, and which always ought to be avoided." Not all the criticisms are unfounded, and Corneille profited by some of them. Others, from our point of view at least, are extremely ridiculous. The following is perhaps the gem of the collection.

"Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez-vous en eau,
La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau,
Et m'oblige à venger, après ce coup funeste,
Celle que je n'ai plus sur celle qui me reste.

"These four verses, which have been found so beautiful, are, however, only an imitation of beauty; for, in the first place, these melted eyes arouse a feeling of repugnance in all delicate minds. We say indeed 'to melt into tears,' but not 'to melt our eyes.' Moreover, we do call a mistress the half of our life, but not a father. And then to say that the half of a life has killed the other half, and that we must avenge this half upon the other half and speak and walk with a third life after having lost the two halves, — all that is only a false brilliant which dazzles the eyes of those who take pleasure in its sparkle."

This criticism of the versification and language is followed by the citation of the Spanish verses which have been appropriated by Corneille. The "Observations" end with the assurance that envy has not inspired their author to write, and that he would have concealed the faults of the "Cid" had he not felt obliged to show the author that he ought to be content with being the citizen of such a fine republic (the republic of letters) without imagining with so little reason (in the "Excuse à Ariste") that he can become its tyrant.

The "Observations" created a sensation; within a short time — some three or four months — they ran through three editions. Scudéry had not signed, but Corneille was well aware with whom he had to deal, and addressed him a "Lettre Apologetique" in which he asserts: "To represent me as an ignoramus you have tried to impose upon the simple, and have advanced on your own authority dramatic maxims which, were they true, would not lead to the rigorous conclusions which you have drawn. You make a great display of your knowledge of Aristotle and other authorities whom perhaps you never read nor understood, and who all fail you as a guarantee." He follows with a summing-up of Scudéry's criticisms, and concludes, unfortunately, with a remark which increased the number and the bitterness of his adversaries: "You have done your best to displace me from the first rank, to which many capable people assign me, and to bring me down to a level lower than that occupied by Clavaret."¹ Scudéry vouchsafed no direct answer, but presented his "Observations" to the Academy, asking them to pass judgment upon the validity of his criticisms.

In 1634 a number of French men of letters were in the habit of meeting at the home of one of their number (Conrart) to discuss their literary undertakings and all questions of art and literature. Richelieu, having learned of this, offered them his protection and his favor to elevate their society to the dignity of a national institution. After some hesitation his overtures were accepted, and a constitution was adopted in which there was incorporated a declaration of the purpose of the Academy to work for the embellishment and purification of the French language. The means by which this purpose was to be attained were the production of a dictionary, a grammar, and an "ars poetica." By the first of 1637 the Academy was in active operation, and all the measures of its establishment had been carried out except the ratification of its charter by the Parliament of Paris, which, actuated by a deep-seated distrust of the cardinal's motives in founding this institution, withheld its approval.

¹ A secondary dramatic poet of the period. Corneille was incensed against him because he had distributed the verses of Mairet which were the signal for the outbreak of trouble.

Pellisson, the first historian of the Academy and the only writer who has had access to its registers during this period of its existence, would have us believe that its members were very unwilling to comply with Scudéry's request and only consented upon the express command of their patron, and after Corneille had given a grudging consent. But this is an error or a misrepresentation, or possibly something of both. According to Pellisson the letter in which Corneille gave his consent was dated from Rouen, June 13, 1637, while the Academy did not begin its deliberations till the 16th of the same month. But a letter of Chapelain, who did the lion's share of the Academy's work, shows that at least one session had been devoted to the work previous to the alleged date of Corneille's letter. The same letter indicates too that the Academy undertook the work with some enthusiasm, and apparently without much thought as to possible consequences. But when opposition developed not only from some of its own members friendly to Corneille (Mairet speaks of one unnamed as having been especially active) but also from the public and parliament, the Academicians would have liked to recede. At this point, which seems to have come about a month after the presentation of the "Observations," there is no question but that the cardinal intervened and insisted that the Academy should carry through the work, in spite of the strong remonstrance of one of their number (Gombauld) that "to condemn what the public loved was not the proper method of gaining the favor of the people." This remonstrance indicates also what was the cardinal's motive in interfering. He wanted the Academy to show by this work that it was in reality a literary and artistic rather than a political institution, as his enemies represented and as many doubtless believed it to be. The motives of literary jealousy, of disapproval of the attitude toward the duel represented in the "Cid," and of dislike for the glorification of the ideals of honor and bravery of a hostile country (Spain), which have been imputed to Richelieu since Pellisson, seem to rest chiefly upon the gossip inspired by the almost universal distrust and dread with which he was regarded. But it is doubtless true that Richelieu shared the opinion of many of the doctrinaires of his time, and especially Chapelain, who in the above cited letter declared "that in Italy the 'Cid' would have

been considered barbarous, and that there was not an academy of that country which would not have banished it from its jurisdiction." This doctrinaire interest of the Great Cardinal is attested by the fact that he proposed for incorporation in the Academy's judgment a chapter on the use of the Marvelous in tragedy, as is shown by a manuscript letter of Chapelain's correspondence preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris.

Impressed with the delicacy of its undertaking, the Academy proceeded with the utmost deliberation, and its "Sentiments on the Cid" did not appear till early in December, 1637, or about six months after Scudéry had presented his "Observations." In the meantime the discussion between the poet and his adversaries waxed more and more violent. The critics of the "Cid" continued to draw attention to the infringement of the rules, while its supporters either tried to prove that it conformed to these rules in the essential points or satisfied themselves with insisting on its great success. One of these latter, signing himself "A Citizen of Paris, Deacon of his Parish," boldly asserted: "I have never read Aristotle, and I do not know the rules of the theater; I decide on the merits of a piece by the amount of pleasure I derive from it." But the upholders of this very rational view were decidedly in the minority among those who took part in the quarrel. There were others who tried to persuade the poets to drop their quarrel and proceed with their productive work. Notable among these is the "Unknown and True Friend of Scudéry and Corneille" who is generally supposed to have been Rotrou, himself one of the leading dramatic poets of the time. He censures Scudéry for having "brought to the eyes of the public a work which injured a man of his profession and of his company," and still more Corneille, "who had laid claim to a degree of preëminence over Scudéry, who had made an infinite number of the finest dramatic poems then being played, which were (with the Cid's permission) as good as it or better, whether in gross or detail, from near or from afar." He ends with an exhortation to both poets to "use their time for works more worthy of their talents, and not to make war upon each other at the persuasion of those who like trouble and are afraid of seeing them write better *than they*." These counsels passed unheeded, and the discussion

became more and more personal. In July Mairet wrote a letter in which he taunted Corneille with being afraid to submit his work to the Academy. Corneille or one of his friends replied with a protest that he was not afraid of the Academy's judgment; on the contrary, he would welcome a comparison between his and Mairet's poems—but "he would never consent to a comparison of his 'Cid' with a libel." Unfortunately this pamphlet contained, in addition, some reflections on Mairet's family and social standing. The answer was an apology written by a friend of Mairet's, containing the latter's statement of his pedigree; the whole ending with clearly-implied threats of personal violence. This apology came directly to the attention of Richelieu, who concluded that the affair had gone far enough. Accordingly he had his protégé Boisrobert write on October 5 a letter in which, after some compliments, he ordered Mairet, under penalty of incurring his displeasure, to forget his resentment and renew his former friendship with the author of the "Cid." Boisrobert, on his own authority, comforted Mairet with the assurance that the "Cid" would shortly receive its deserts at the hands of the Academy. The same letter contained the statement that a letter of the same nature had been written to Corneille, and it was probably to this letter that the poet of the "Cid" replied with the letter which Pellisson cites as anterior to the Academy's undertaking the judgment of the "Cid": "the Academy may do as it likes, since you (Boisrobert) tell me that my lord (Richelieu) would be pleased to see their judgment and that that would divert his Eminence."

This was the end of the quarrel as far as the principals were concerned, unless we include the preface written by Corneille for an edition of one of his early comedies—"La Suivante," which appeared in September, 1637, some three months before the Academy's "Sentiments" left the press. This preface contains a general statement of the poet's position at that time in regard to the rules: "I like to follow the rules; but, far from making myself their slave, I extend or restrict them according to the needs of my subject, and I even break the one regulating the duration of the action when it seems to me absolutely incompatible with the beauty of the events which I am portraying. To know the rules and to understand the

secret of applying them to our theater are two very different sciences; and perhaps, to make a successful piece, it is not enough to have studied in the books of Aristotle and Horace. . . . My opinion is that of Terence: since we make poems to be represented, our first purpose should be to please the court and the people and to attract many to our representations. We must, if it be possible, also observe the rules so as not to displease the connoisseurs and thus to receive universal applause, but above all let us gain the public approval. Otherwise, it is of no avail to make our piece regular if it is hissed upon the stage; the connoisseurs will not dare declare in our favor, and will prefer to say that we have failed to understand the rules rather than praise us when we are decried by the general consent of those who see in the play only a means of diversion."

The "Sentiments of the French Academy on the 'Cid'" appeared early in December, 1637. The Academy, after ample apologies, undertook the general examination of the "Cid" with a very careful consideration of the points made by Scudéry, whose order and method it followed. The work, which owed its form chiefly to the care of one of the most prominent Academicians (Jean Chapelain), was very painstaking and judicial, and — from a rigid doctrinaire standpoint — just. The results arrived at appear in the conclusion: "Finally we conclude that, although the subject of the 'Cid' is not good, and though it sins in its dénouement, and though encumbered with useless episodes, and though in many passages the proprieties are sinned against as well as the proper adaptation to the stage, and though it contains many examples of common and impure diction, nevertheless the simplicity and the vehemence of its passions, the force and delicacy of many of its thoughts, and that inexplicable charm which is mingled with all its defects, have gained for it a considerable place among the French poems of this kind which have given the most satisfaction. If its author does not owe all his reputation to its merit, he does not owe it all to his good fortune either, and nature has been liberal enough to him to excuse fortune if the latter has been lavish." Although the sentiments are thus balanced in the conclusion, a reading of the whole work leaves a clear impression that the unfavorable criticism predominates considerably over the favorable.

Scudéry expressed himself as quite content, while Corneille was inclined to look upon the result with disappointment and something of resentment. This finds expression in the preface ("Avertissement") to the editions of 1648-1656. "I feel myself obliged to disabuse the public of two errors which have arisen concerning this tragedy. The first is that I have accepted the judges who have decided upon its merits, and that I have deferred to the sentiments of those who have been asked to pass judgment upon it. . . . That is something unparalleled up to the present time, and of all those who have been attacked no one, so far as I know, has been so weak as to agree upon judges with his censors; if they have allowed their works to be freely judged, as I have done, it has been without obliging themselves, any more than I have, to abide by the outcome; besides, in the state in which the affairs of the 'Cid' were at that time it took no great prophet to foresee what finally happened. Unless one be absolutely stupid, one could not be ignorant that questions of this kind concern neither nature nor the state; they can be settled by the rules of human procedure as well as by those of the theater, and every one knows that the rules of good Aristotle may be turned without scruple to the support of politics. I do not know whether those who have judged the 'Cid' have followed their own judgment or not, nor do I wish to say that they have judged well or badly, but I will say that it has never been with my consent that they passed their judgment, and that perhaps I should have justified it without much trouble if the same reason which made them speak had not made me keep silent [reference to Richelieu's intervention]. Aristotle has not explained himself so clearly in his 'Poetica' that we may not do as the philosophers do who cite him in support of their contrary opinions; and, as this is an unknown country for many people, the most zealous partisans of the 'Cid' have believed its critics without question, and have imagined that all objections were fully satisfied when they maintained that it mattered little whether the piece was according to the rules of Aristotle and that Aristotle had made his rules for his country and for the Greeks, not for the French. The second error which my silence has affirmed is no less injurious to Aristotle. . . . Certainly I should be the first to condemn the 'Cid' if it sinned against those great and

sovereign maxims which we hold from this philosopher. But, far from agreeing to this, I dare to say that this fortunate poem has had such an extraordinary success only because it embodies the main conditions which this great master of excellent tragedies commends, and which are so rarely contained in the same work that one of Aristotle's most learned commentators (Francesco Robortelli) claims that they are found only in the 'Œdipus.' The first is that the one who suffers and is persecuted shall be neither entirely bad nor altogether virtuous, but a man more virtuous than bad, who by some act of human weakness which is not a crime falls into an undeserved misfortune; the other, that the persecution and the peril shall come not from an enemy nor from an indifferent person, but from a person who ought to love the one who suffers or be loved by him. And this, discreetly speaking, is the real and sole cause of the success of the 'Cid,' in which these two conditions must be recognized unless one persists in doing it an injustice."

In spite of his show of independence, the "Sentiments of the Academy on the 'Cid'" marked a turning-point in Corneille's work as well as in the production of French drama in general, and all the poet's work after the "Cid" shows a constant preoccupation for the observance of the established rules of dramatic composition. And for almost two centuries, until the time of the Romanticist movement in the nineteenth century, the French drama was to develop along the lines hereby established.

In the general edition of his works in 1660 Corneille wrote for each of his plays an *Examen*, a careful study of the dramatic qualities and defects of the piece in question. In the *Examen* of the "Cid," which here follows, we have the final answer of the poet to some of the main criticisms of Scudéry and the Academy, as well as an index of his mature and practiced conception of the dramatic art. It is of great importance as an indication of the progress of dramatic composition during the second quarter of the seventeenth century toward classic purity and regularity.

EXAMEN

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Ce poème a tant d'avantages du côté du sujet et des pensées brillantes dont il est semé, que la plupart de ses auditeurs n'ont pas voulu voir les défauts de sa conduite, et ont laissé enlever leurs suffrages au plaisir que leur a donné sa représentation. Bien que ce soit celui de tous mes ouvrages réguliers où je me suis permis le plus de licence, il passe encore pour le plus beau auprès de ceux qui ne s'attachent pas à la dernière sévérité des règles ; et depuis cinquante ans qu'il tient sa place sur nos théâtres, l'histoire ni l'effort de l'imagination n'y ont rien fait voir qui en aie effacé l'éclat. Aussi a-t-il les deux grandes conditions que demande Aristote aux tragédies parfaites, et dont l'assemblage se rencontre si rarement chez les anciens ni chez les modernes ; il les assemble même plus fortement et plus noblement que les espèces que pose ce philosophe. Une maîtresse que son devoir force à poursuivre la mort de son amant, qu'elle tremble d'obtenir, a les passions plus vives et plus allumées que tout ce qui peut se passer entre un mari et sa femme, une mère et son fils, un frère et sa sœur ; et la haute vertu dans un naturel sensible à ces passions, qu'elle dompte sans les affaiblir, et à qui elle laisse toute leur force pour en triompher plus glorieusement, a quelque chose de plus touchant, de plus élevé et de plus aimable que cette médiocre bonté, capable d'une faiblesse, et même d'un crime, où nos anciens étaient contraints d'arrêter le caractère le plus parfait des rois et des princes dont ils faisaient leurs héros, afin que ces taches et ces forfaits, défigurant ce qu'ils leur laissaient.

de vertu, s'accommodassent au goût et aux souhaits de leurs spectateurs, et fortifiassent l'horreur qu'ils avaient conçue de leur domination et de la monarchie.

Rodrigue suit ici son devoir sans rien relâcher de sa passion ; Chimène fait la même chose à son tour, sans laisser 5 ébranler son dessein par la douleur où elle se voit abîmée par là ; et si la présence de son amant lui fait faire quelque faux pas, c'est une glissade dont elle se relève à l'heure même ; et non seulement elle connaît si bien sa faute qu'elle nous en 10 avertit, mais elle fait un prompt désaveu de tout ce qu'une vue si chère lui a pu arracher. Il n'est point besoin qu'on lui reproche qu'il lui est honteux de souffrir l'entretien de son amant après qu'il a tué son père ; elle avoue que c'est la seule prise que la médisance aura sur elle. Si elle s'emporte jus- 15 qu'à lui dire qu'elle veut bien qu'on sache qu'elle l'adore et le poursuit, ce n'est point une résolution si ferme, qu'elle l'empêche de cacher son amour de tout son possible lorsqu'elle est en la présence du roi. S'il lui échappe de l'encourager au combat contre don Sanche par ces paroles :

Sors vainqueur d'un combat dont Chimène est le prix, 20

elle ne se contente pas de s'enfuir de honte au même moment ; mais sitôt qu'elle est avec Elvire, à qui elle ne déguise rien de ce qui se passe dans son âme, et que la vue de ce cher objet ne lui fait plus de violence, elle forme un souhait plus raisonnable, qui satisfait sa vertu et son amour 25 tout ensemble, et demande au ciel que le combat se termine

Sans faire aucun des deux ni vaincu ni vainqueur.

Si elle ne dissimule point qu'elle penche du côté de Rodrigue, de peur d'être à Don Sanche, pour qui elle a de l'aversion, cela ne détruit point la protestation qu'elle a faite un peu 30 auparavant, que malgré la loi de ce combat, et les promesses que le roi a faites à Rodrigue, elle lui fera mille autres

ennemis, s'il en sort victorieux. Ce grand éclat même qu'elle laisse faire à son amour après qu'elle le croit mort, est suivi d'une opposition vigoureuse à l'exécution de cette loi qui la donne à son amant, et elle ne se tait qu'après que le roi l'a différée, et lui a laissé lieu d'espérer qu'avec le temps il y 5 pourra survenir quelque obstacle. Je sais bien que le silence passe d'ordinaire pour une marque de consentement ; mais quand les rois parlent, c'en est une de contradiction : on ne manque jamais à leur applaudir quand on entre dans leurs sentiments ; et le seul moyen de leur contredire avec le res- 10 pect qui leur est dû, c'est de se taire, quand leurs ordres ne sont pas si pressants qu'on ne puisse remettre à s'excuser de leur obéir lorsque le temps en sera venu, et conserver cependant une espérance légitime d'un empêchement, qu'on ne peut encore déterminément prévoir. 15

Il est vrai que dans ce sujet il faut se contenter de tirer Rodrigue de péril, sans le pousser jusqu'à son mariage avec Chimène. Il est historique, et a plu en son temps ; mais bien sûrement il déplairait au nôtre ; et j'ai peine à voir que Chimène y consente chez l'auteur espagnol, bien qu'il donne 20 plus de trois ans de durée à la comédie qu'il en a faite. Pour ne pas contredire l'histoire, j'ai cru ne me pouvoir dispenser d'en jeter quelque idée, mais avec incertitude de l'effet ; et ce n'était que par là que je pouvais accorder la bienséance du théâtre avec la vérité de l'événement. 25

Les deux visites que Rodrigue fait à sa maîtresse ont quelque chose qui choque cette bienséance de la part de celle qui les souffre ; la rigueur du devoir voulait qu'elle refusât de lui parler, et s'enfermât dans son cabinet, au lieu de l'écouter ; mais permettez-moi de dire avec un des premiers esprits 30 de notre siècle « que leur conversation est remplie de si beaux sentiments que plusieurs n'ont pas connu ce défaut, et que ceux qui l'ont connu l'ont toléré. » J'irai plus outre, et dirai

que tous presque ont souhaité que ces entretiens se fissent ; et j'ai remarqué aux premières représentations qu'alors que ce malheureux amant se présentait devant elle, il s'élevait un certain frémissement dans l'assemblée, qui marquait une curiosité merveilleuse et un redoublement d'attention pour 5 ce qu'ils avaient à se dire dans un état si pitoyable. Aristote dit qu'il y a des absurdités qu'il faut laisser dans un poème, quand on peut espérer qu'elles seront bien reçues ; et il est du devoir du poète, en ce cas, de les couvrir de tant de brillants qu'elles puissent éblouir. Je laisse au jugement de 10 mes auditeurs si je me suis assez bien acquitté de ce devoir pour justifier par là ces deux scènes. Les pensées de la première des deux sont quelquefois trop spirituelles pour partir de personnes fort affligées ; mais outre que je n'ai fait que la paraphraser de l'espagnol, si nous ne nous permettions 15 quelque chose de plus ingénieux que le cours ordinaire de la passion, nos poèmes ramperaient souvent, et les grandes douleurs ne mettraient dans la bouche de nos acteurs que des exclamations et des hélas. Pour ne déguiser rien, cette offre que fait Rodrigue de son épée à Chimène, et cette protesta- 20 tion de se laisser tuer par Don Sanche, ne me plairaient pas maintenant. Ces beautés étaient de mise en ce temps-là, et ne le seraient plus en celui-ci. La première est dans l'original espagnol, et l'autre est tirée sur ce modèle. Toutes les deux ont fait leur effet en ma faveur ; mais je ferais scrupule d'en 25 étaler de pareilles à l'avenir sur notre théâtre.

J'ai dit ailleurs ma pensée touchant l'Infante et le Roi ; il reste néanmoins quelque chose à examiner sur la manière dont ce dernier agit, qui ne paraît pas assez vigoureuse, en ce qu'il ne fait pas arrêter le Comte après le soufflet donné, et 30 n'envoie pas des gardes à don Diègue et à son fils. Sur quoi on peut considérer que don Fernand étant le premier roi de *Castille*, et ceux qui en avaient été maîtres auparavant lui

n'ayant eu titre que de comtes, il n'était peut-être pas assez absolu sur les grands seigneurs de son royaume pour le pouvoir faire. Chez don Guillen de Castro, qui a traité ce sujet avant moi, et qui devait mieux connaître que moi quelle était l'autorité de ce premier monarque de son pays, le soufflet se 5 donne en sa présence et en celle de deux ministres d'État, qui lui conseillent, après que le Comte s'est retiré fièrement et avec bravade, et que don Diègue a fait la même chose en soupirant, de ne le pousser point à bout, parce qu'il a quantité d'amis dans les Asturies, qui se pourraient révolter, 10 et prendre parti avec les Maures dont son État est environné. Ainsi il se résout d'accommoder l'affaire sans bruit, et recommande le secret à ces deux ministres, qui ont été seuls témoins de l'action. C'est sur cet exemple que je me suis cru bien fondé à le faire agir plus mollement qu'on ne ferait en 15 ce temps-ci, où l'autorité royale est plus absolue. Je ne pense pas non plus qu'il fasse une faute bien grande de ne jeter point l'alarme de nuit dans sa ville, sur l'avis incertain qu'il a du dessein des Maures, puisqu'on faisait bonne garde sur les murs et sur le port ; mais il est inexcusable de n'y donner 20 aucun ordre après leur arrivée, et de laisser tout faire à Rodrigue. La loi du combat qu'il propose à Chimène avant que de le permettre à don Sanche contre Rodrigue, n'est pas si injuste que quelques-uns ont voulu le dire, parce qu'elle est plutôt une menace pour la faire dédire de la demande de ce 25 combat qu'un arrêt qu'il lui veuille faire exécuter. Cela paraît en ce qu'après la victoire de Rodrigue il n'en exige pas précisément l'effet de sa parole, et la laisse en état d'espérer que cette condition n'aura point de lieu.

Je ne puis dénier que la règle des vingt et quatre heures 30 presse trop les incidents de cette pièce. La mort du Comte et l'arrivée des Maures s'y pouvaient entresuivre d'aussi près qu'elles font, parce que cette arrivée est une surprise qui n'a

point de communication ni de mesures à prendre avec le reste ; mais il n'en va pas ainsi du combat de don Sanche, dont le roi était le maître, et pouvait lui choisir un autre temps que deux heures après la fuite des Maures. Leur défaite avait assez fatigué Rodrigue toute la nuit pour mériter 5 deux ou trois jours de repos, et même il y avait quelque apparence qu'il n'en était pas échappé sans blessures, quoique je n'en aie rien dit, parce qu'elles n'auraient fait que nuire à la conclusion de l'action.

Cette même règle presse aussi trop Chimène de demander 10 justice au roi la seconde fois. Elle l'avait fait le soir d'auparavant, et n'avait aucun sujet d'y retourner le lendemain matin pour en importuner le roi, dont elle n'avait encore aucun lieu de se plaindre, puisqu'elle ne pouvait encore dire qu'il lui eût manqué de promesse. Le roman lui aurait donné sept ou 15 huit jours de patience, avant que de l'en presser de nouveau ; mais les vingt et quatre heures ne l'ont pas permis.

C'est l'incommodité de la règle ; passons à celle de l'unité de lieu, qui ne m'a pas donné moins de gêne en cette pièce. Je l'ai placé dans Séville, bien que don Fernand n'en aie 20 jamais été le maître, et j'ai été obligé à cette falsification, pour former quelque vraisemblance à la descente des Maures, dont l'armée ne pouvait venir si vite par terre que par eau. Je ne voudrais pas assurer toutefois que le flux de la mer monte effectivement jusque-là ; mais comme dans notre Seine 25 il fait encore plus de chemin qu'il ne lui en faut faire sur le Guadalquivir pour battre les murailles de cette ville, cela peut suffire à fonder quelque probabilité parmi nous, pour ceux qui n'ont point été sur le lieu même.

Cette arrivée des Maures ne laisse pas d'avoir ce défaut, 30 que j'ai marqué ailleurs, qu'ils se présentent d'eux-mêmes, sans être appelés dans la pièce, directement ni indirectement, *par aucun acteur* du premier acte. Ils ont plus de justesse

dans l'irrégularité de l'auteur espagnol : Rodrigue n'osant plus se montrer à la cour, les va combattre sur la frontière ; et ainsi le premier acteur les va chercher, et leur donne place dans le poème, au contraire de ce qui arrive ici, où ils semblent se venir faire de fête exprès pour en être battus, 5 et lui donner moyen de rendre à son roi un service d'importance, qui lui fasse obtenir sa grâce. C'est une seconde incommodité de la règle dans cette tragédie.

Tout s'y passe donc dans Séville, et garde ainsi quelque espèce d'unité de lieu en général ; mais le lieu particulier 10 change de scène en scène, et tantôt c'est le palais du Roi, tantôt l'appartement de l'Infante, tantôt la maison de Chimène, et tantôt une rue ou place publique. On le détermine aisément pour les scènes détachées ; mais pour celles qui ont leur liaison ensemble, comme les quatre dernières du premier acte, 15 il est malaisé d'en choisir un qui convienne à toutes. Le Comte et don Diègue se querellent au sortir du palais ; cela se peut passer dans une rue ; mais après le soufflet reçu, don Diègue ne peut pas demeurer en cette rue à faire ses plaintes, attendant que son fils survienne, qu'il ne soit tout 20 aussitôt environné de peuple, et ne reçoive l'offre de quelques amis. Ainsi il serait plus à propos qu'il se plaignît dans sa maison, où le met l'Espagnol, pour laisser aller ses sentiments en liberté ; mais en ce cas il faudrait délier les scènes comme il a fait. En l'état où elles sont ici, on peut dire qu'il faut 25 quelquefois aider au théâtre, et suppléer favorablement ce qui ne s'y peut représenter. Deux personnes s'y arrêtent pour parler, et quelquefois il faut présumer qu'ils marchent, ce qu'on ne peut exposer sensiblement à la vue, parce qu'ils échapperaient aux yeux avant que d'avoir pu dire ce qu'il est 30 nécessaire qu'ils fassent savoir à l'auditeur. Ainsi, par une fiction de théâtre, on peut s'imaginer que don Diègue et le Comte, sortant du palais du roi, avancent toujours en se

querellant, et sont arrivés devant la maison de ce premier lorsqu'il reçoit le soufflet qui l'oblige à y entrer pour y chercher du secours. Si cette fiction poétique ne vous satisfait point, laissons-le dans la place publique, et disons que le concours du peuple autour de lui après cette offense, et les 5 offres de service que lui font les premiers amis qui s'y rencontrent, sont des circonstances que le roman ne doit pas oublier ; mais que ces menues actions ne servant de rien à la principale, il n'est pas besoin que le poète s'en embarrasse sur la scène. Horace l'en dispense par ces vers : 1.

Hoc amet, hoc spernat promissi carminis auctor,
Pleraque negligat . . .

Et ailleurs :

Semper ad eventum festinet.

C'est ce qui m'a fait négliger, au troisième acte, de donner 1 à don Diègue, pour aide à chercher son fils, aucun des cinq cents amis qu'il avait chez lui. Il y a grande apparence que quelques-uns d'eux l'y accompagnaient, et même que quelques autres le cherchaient pour lui d'un autre côté ; mais ces accompagnements inutiles de personnes qui n'ont 21 rien à dire, puisque celui qu'ils accompagnent a seul tout l'intérêt à l'action, ces sortes d'accompagnements, dis-je, ont toujours mauvaise grâce au théâtre, et d'autant plus que les comédiens n'emploient à ces personnages muets que leurs moucheurs de chandelles et leurs valets, qui ne savent quelle 22 posture tenir.

Les funérailles du comte étaient encore une chose fort embarrassante, soit qu'elles se soient faites avant la fin de la pièce, soit que le corps ait demeuré en présence dans son hôtel, attendant qu'on y donnât ordre. Le moindre mot que 30 j'en eusse laissé dire, pour en prendre soin, eût rompu toute la chaleur de l'attention, et rempli l'auditeur d'une fâcheuse

idée. J'ai cru plus à propos de les dérober à son imagination par mon silence, aussi bien que le lieu précis de ces quatre scènes du premier acte dont je viens de parler ; et je m'assure que cet artifice m'a si bien réussi, que peu de personnes ont pris garde à l'un ni à l'autre, et que la plupart des spectateurs, laissant emporter leurs esprits à ce qu'ils ont vu et entendu de pathétique en ce poème, ne se sont point avisés de réfléchir sur ces deux considérations.

J'achève par une remarque sur ce que dit Horace, que ce qu'on expose à la vue touche bien plus que ce qu'on n'ap- 10 prend que par un récit.

C'est sur quoi je me suis fondé pour faire voir le soufflet que reçoit don Diègue, et cacher aux yeux la mort du comte, afin d'acquérir et conserver à mon premier acteur l'amitié des auditeurs, si nécessaire pour réussir au théâtre. L'indi- 15 gnité d'un affront fait à un vieillard, chargé d'années et de victoires, les jette aisément dans le parti de l'offensé ; et cette mort, qu'on vient dire au roi tout simplement sans aucune narration touchante, n'excite point en eux la commisération qu'y eût fait naître le spectacle de son sang, et ne leur donne 20 aucune aversion pour ce malheureux amant, qu'ils ont vu forcé par ce qu'il devait à son honneur d'en venir à cette extrémité, malgré l'intérêt et la tendresse de son amour.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

ACTEURS: Ferdinand I, or Ferdinand the Great, died in 1075. He left two daughters, Doña Urraca and Doña Elvira. In the "Historia d'España" by Mariana, which is cited by Corneille, mention is made of Don Gomez, Ximena (Chimène), and Ruy Diaz de Bivar (Don Rodrigue). The historian also speaks of Don Diego Laynez (Don Diègue), and refers to Don Arias Gonzales (Don Arias) as an old officer long in the king's service. All the other names, with the exception of Leonor, are found in the work of Mariana or in that of Guillen de Castro, but the names Don Sanche and Don Alonse are attributed to different persons in Corneille's play.

à Séville: In his "Examen" Corneille remarks that "everything takes place in Seville, and thus observes a sort of general unity of place [cf. Intr., p. viii]; but the special place of action changes from scene to scene; now it is the king's palace, now the apartments of the infanta, now the house of Chimène, and again a street or public square." And elsewhere: "the 'Cid' multiplies the places of action still more [than 'Le menteur' and 'La Suite du menteur'], without, however, leaving Seville; and, as the concatenation of scenes is not preserved, the stage in the first act is the house of Chimène, the apartment of the infanta in the king's palace, and the public square; the second act adds to this the king's chamber; doubtless this license is somewhat excessive."

ACT I

SCENE I: owing to the necessity of representing the action of their plays within a limited space of time, the classic French dramatists were obliged to take their hearers and readers immediately *in medias res*. To show us the knighting of Rodrigue, and to represent the growth of love as it springs up gradually in the hearts of the Infante and of Chimène, as our English dramatists would probably do, and as Guillen de Castro really did in his "Mocedades del Cid," is thus put beyond the reach of the French poet. The first act of a tragedy, says Corneille ("Discours

du poème dramatique”), takes the place of the ancient prologue whose purpose it was “to inform the spectator of all that had taken place before the beginning of the action which was to be represented, and of all that he needed to know in order to understand what he was about to see.” This was to be done so thoroughly that “no actor shall enter in the remaining acts of the play who is not known through this first act, or who at least has not been spoken of by some one who has been introduced there.” Always bear in mind that this and other conventions adopted during the French classic period were adopted in the interests of clearness and probability, as it was then considered.

In reading the lines the student will bear in mind that French verse is based wholly upon the number of syllables. The mute *e*, which is practically always silent at the end of a word in prose, counts in poetry the same as any other syllable unless it comes at the end of a verse or before a following word beginning with a vowel or mute *h*, in which case it is elided. The verse of French tragedy is the so-called Alexandrine, consisting of twelve syllables with a *cæsura* or pause after the sixth syllable. The two halves of the verse are called hemistichs; these again are divided into two parts consisting of any of the possible divisions of six syllables, i.e. 5-1, 4-2, 3-3, etc. The last syllable of each hemistich is stressed; but that of the first, before the *cæsura*, somewhat more lightly. Care must be taken not to fall into a singsong manner of reading. This is avoided by paying very careful attention to the *cæsural* and final pauses, which are made longer or shorter according to the nature and movement of the verse. The division of syllables in these first verses is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Elvire, m'as-tu fait un rapport bien sincère ?											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ne déguises-tu rien de ce qu'a dit mon père ?											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tous mes sens à moi-même en sont encor charmés :											
Il estime Rodrigue autant que vous l'aimez,											
Et si je ne m'abuse à lire dans son âme,											
Il vous commandera de répondre à sa flamme.											

In editions previous to that of 1664, the scene between Chimène and Elvire is shorter and is preceded by a first scene in which the Comte and Elvire hold the conversation which Elvire here reports to Chimène. Scudéry and the Academy both thought that to show Elvire (*cette suivante*) discussing affairs of state with the Comte was beneath the *dignity of tragic composition*.

3 à moi-même: the emphatic possessive pronoun expressed in modern French by *à moi*. In English we should say 'my feelings too.'—**encor**: the final *e* is often dropped from *encore* in poetry to avoid the extra syllable.

5 à lire: for the modern *en lisant*; many examples of this usage will be noted in this and other works of this period.

16 me penche: a number of verbs like *pencher*, *prosperer*, *tomber*, etc. often possessed a transitive force equivalent to the modern French *faire pencher* etc.

30 à: this use of *à* instead of *pour* is quite characteristic of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

39 n'a trait: for *n'a aucun trait*. Up to the sixteenth century *ne* alone expressed negation. Modern usage took form during the seventeenth.

37 du fils: *de* is used much more freely in cases like this with the meaning 'of,' 'in regard to,' 'on the part of,' etc. than in modern French, where this use of the preposition is quite restricted.

43 à son fils: 'for his son'; *à* was often used in the seventeenth century to denote the end or purpose of an action, where in modern French *pour* would be used.

50 au sortir: in modern French the infinitive is, for the most part, used only as the subject or object of a verb, but in Corneille's time it filled all the uses of a noun. *Au sortir du conseil*, 'at the going out of the council,' 'at the end of the council.'

62 même désir: the article was omitted quite generally before *même* in the seventeenth century.

78 à la tenir: again instead of modern *en* with the present participle.

87 s'oublier: with this exclamatory infinitive compare the exclamatory infinitive "to think" in the English equivalent 'to think that a great princess should' etc.

94 le seul mérite: the meaning of adjectives did not depend on their position as in modern French; so *le seul mérite* is here equivalent to the modern *le mérite seul* 'merit alone,' 'merit in itself.'

103 liens: this noun is an exception to the rule that a word whose only vowels are *ien* is a monosyllable.

117 contraigne: the original verse was *Je suis au désespoir que l'amour me contraigne*, where the use of the subjunctive is of course quite clear. In substituting the phrase *Je vois avec chagrin que*, the poet was probably thinking rather of the meaning than of the changed grammatical relation of the sentence; i.e., the idea of the modifying phrase became embodied in the verb, which is naturally followed by the indicative. Or

it may have been a mere oversight, helped on by the necessities of the rime and by the general tendency of the period to use the subjunctive after all expressions of joy or sorrow, etc.

121 *et souhaite*: since the Academy criticized the poet for not repeating the object *le* before the second verb *souhaite*, it is evident that Corneille's construction was becoming obsolete.

124 *il*: antecedent *cet hymen*, verse 121. Reread this passage in the light of what is said about social ideals on p. xxiii of the Introduction.

135 "This verse," said Scudéry, "is, if I am not mistaken, little better than mere nonsense." We may agree with him, but such plays on words (or *pointes*, as they were called) were looked upon at the time as one of the finest ornaments of lyric poetry: for example, *Je meurs de désir, en vivant d'espérance* (Bertaut), or

Mais dans les maux dont je me sens périr,
Je suis si content de mourir,
Que ce plaisir me redonne la vie. (Voiture.)

Nearly all of the sentimental utterances of the Infante are quite typical of the love-lorn lyric poetry of the period.

138 *dedans*: in the seventeenth century *dedans* was frequently used as a simple preposition like modern *dans*.

SCENES I-II: these two first scenes were suppressed during the eighteenth century on the ground that they added nothing to the piece. However, the interest of the drama as well as the integrity of the text demanded their restoration. They are very severely condemned by Voltaire, whose remarks should suggest something of the attitude of earlier French poets and critics toward the drama as a work of art. "This is an intolerable defect for us. The stage remains empty; the scenes are not bound together, the action is interrupted. Why do the actors of the preceding scenes go away? Why do these new actors come on? How can the one go away without seeing the others? How can Chimène see the Infante without saluting her? This great defect was common to all Europe, and the French alone have corrected themselves. The more difficult it is to bind the scenes together, the more meritorious is the overcoming of this difficulty. But it must not be overcome at the expense of interest and probability."

157 This *pour* + adjective + *que* + subjunctive, denoting concession, — 'however great kings may be,' — like *si grands que, quelque grands que*, while, adjudged obsolete by Voltaire, has regained ground. — Note in reading this verse that the mute *e* of *ent* in *soient* does not

count as a syllable. This is true of the *ent's* of all imperfects and conditionals and of the third person plural of the present subjunctive of *être* and *avoir*.

160 These were startling words at a time when the throne, through Cardinal Richelieu, was bending all its energies to the task of humbling the nobles and depriving them of their feudal powers.

164 These verses represent the other side, the orthodox side of the case. They are not the expression of servile flattery, for it was a general conviction in France that the only possibility of the country's enjoying peace and prosperity lay in the centralization of power in the throne. It was a conviction born of a long train of disasters and civil wars resulting from a different régime. It is a sentiment frequently recurring in the works of Corneille.

166 *sacré* *nœud*: the usage regarding the position of adjectives in respect to the noun was being fixed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Variations in both directions from modern rules are often found in these dramas.

173 *Exercez-la*: the *la* refers to *dignité* rather than the nearer *vanité*.

182 Littré cites this verse as an example of the indefinite use of *soi*. And this in turn shows that verse 178 is equivalent to *montrez-lui comme il faut qu'on s'endurcisse* rather than the *comme il faut qu'il s'endurcisse* which one would expect from the phrase as it stands.

184 Note the cruel sarcasm of the count's words, which dwell only upon those qualities of which age has bereft Don Diègue.

195 *Si vous fîtes*: past condition is usually expressed by *si* with the imperfect indicative. The past definite is rare in modern French, and was not usual even in Corneille's time.

216 *Qui*: here, as often, equivalent to *celui qui*.

226 *Il lui donne un soufflet*: much has been written upon the propriety of this blow given upon the stage in a classic drama. According to Voltaire, "Even the actors give this blow with a great deal of embarrassment; they merely make a pretense of it." This rather excessive delicacy seems to be a later development. An unpublished passage of the "Sentiments de l'Académie Française sur le Cid" would suggest that the scene was acted more violently at the early representations of the "Cid." The passage in question evidently refers to the verses immediately following. The Academy, or Chapelain rather, is criticizing the character of the Count. "If the Poet, in this character of the Count, has offended the proprieties in making him say more than he should, it seems to us that he has committed a like offense in that of Don Diègue in

making him do less than he should, when, the sword having fallen from his hands, and the Count *having haughtily pushed it away with his foot* he (the poet) does not have him (Don Diègue) pick it up to *aveng himself*." After several verbal changes the whole passage is canceled, possibly because of the evident injustice of charging the poet with what might have been merely a bit of stage business on the part of the actor. This byplay has, I believe, never been reproduced, nor has the passage been cited in this connection.

SCENE III: a comparison of this scene with the corresponding scene of the Spanish original by Guillen de Castro (cf. *Intr.*, p. xix) is suggestive of the difference between the more classical treatment of the French poet and the more romantic methods of the Spaniard. In Guillen de Castro this scene takes place in the king's council. The king announces to his counselors his choice of Diego Lainez as tutor for his son. The counselors not concerned praise his choice, but the court speaks bitterly against it, objecting the age of Diego as in Corneille. Don Diego replies, and directly the dialogue is ablaze with resentment.

THE COUNT: I deserved it—

THE KING: Vassals!

THE COUNT: As well as thou or better.

THE KING: Count!

DON DIEGO: Thou dost deceive thyself.

THE COUNT: I say—

THE KING: I am your king.

DIEGO: Say not—

THE COUNT: The hand shall say what the tongue keeps silent. (Gives him a blow.)

SCENE IV: while this feeling of debasement on the part of Don Diègue may seem exaggerated to us, it must be remembered that it did not strike the audiences who attended the early performances of the "Cid" in that way at all. Such ideas of honor and personal dignity actually prevailed, and the sympathy of the spectators with the old hero was no doubt real and strong. Cf. *Intr.*, p. xxiii f.

SCENE V: for one more illustration of dramatic methods compare the corresponding scene in Guillen de Castro. In his drama we see the three sons of Don Diego, Hernan and Bermudo congratulating Roderigo on his elevation to knighthood. The father appears with his staff broken in twain; overwhelmed with shame and anger over the insult he has just received. He cuts short their anxious questions and *bids them leave his presence*. Then he takes down from the wall the

sword of the great Moorish warrior Mudarra and tries to wield it. His strength is gone, he totters and staggers under the momentum of the stroke which he essays. In desperation he calls in his eldest son Hernan. When he appears his father seizes his hand and crushes it in his grasp:

HERNAN: Let go! Let go!

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En cet affront || mon père est l'offensé,
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NOTES ON THE TEXT

ACTEURS: Ferdinand I, or Ferdinand the Great, died in 1075. He left two daughters, Doña Urraca and Doña Elvira. In the "Historia d'España" by Mariana, which is cited by Corneille, mention is made of Don Gomez, Ximena (Chimène), and Ruy Diaz de Bivar (Don Rodrigue). The historian also speaks of Don Diego Laynez (Don Diègue), and refers to Don Arias Gonzales (Don Arias) as an old officer long in the king's service. All the other names, with the exception of Leonor, are found in the work of Mariana or in that of Guillen de Castro, but the names Don Sanche and Don Alonse are attributed to different persons in Corneille's play.

A Séville: In his "Examen" Corneille remarks that "everything takes place in Seville, and thus observes a sort of general unity of place [cf. Intr., p. viii]; but the special place of action changes from scene to scene; now it is the king's palace, now the apartments of the infanta, now the house of Chimène, and again a street or public square." And elsewhere: "the 'Cid' multiplies the places of action still more [than 'Le Menteur' and 'La Suite du Menteur'], without, however, leaving Seville; and, as the concatenation of scenes is not preserved, the stage in the first act is the house of Chimène, the apartment of the infanta in the king's palace, and the public square; the second act adds to this the king's chamber; doubtless this license is somewhat excessive."

ACT I

SCENE I: owing to the necessity of representing the action of their plays within a limited space of time, the classic French dramatists were obliged to take their hearers and readers immediately *in medias res*. To show us the knighting of Rodrigue, and to represent the growth of love as it springs up gradually in the hearts of the Infante and of Chimène, as our English dramatists would probably do, and as Guillen de Castro really did in his "Mocedades del Cid," is thus put beyond the reach of the French poet. The first act of a tragedy, says Corneille ("Discours

du poème dramatique”), takes the place of the ancient prologue whose purpose it was “to inform the spectator of all that had taken place before the beginning of the action which was to be represented, and of all that he needed to know in order to understand what he was about to see.” This was to be done so thoroughly that “no actor shall enter in the remaining acts of the play who is not known through this first act, or who at least has not been spoken of by some one who has been introduced there.” Always bear in mind that this and other conventions adopted during the French classic period were adopted in the interests of clearness and probability, as it was then considered.

In reading the lines the student will bear in mind that French verse is based wholly upon the number of syllables. The mute *e*, which is practically always silent at the end of a word in prose, counts in poetry the same as any other syllable unless it comes at the end of a verse or before a following word beginning with a vowel or mute *h*, in which case it is elided. The verse of French tragedy is the so-called Alexandrine, consisting of twelve syllables with a *cæsura* or pause after the sixth syllable. The two halves of the verse are called hemistichs; these again are divided into two parts consisting of any of the possible divisions of six syllables, i.e. 5-1, 4-2, 3-3, etc. The last syllable of each hemistich is stressed; but that of the first, before the *cæsura*, somewhat more lightly. Care must be taken not to fall into a singsong manner of reading. This is avoided by paying very careful attention to the *cæsural* and final pauses, which are made longer or shorter according to the nature and movement of the verse. The division of syllables in these first verses is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Elvire, m'as-tu fait un rapport bien sincère ?											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ne déguises-tu rien de ce qu'a dit mon père ?											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tous mes sens à moi-même en sont encor charmés :											
Il estime Rodrigue autant que vous l'aimez,											
Et si je ne m'abuse à lire dans son âme,											
Il vous commandera de répondre à sa flamme.											

In editions previous to that of 1664, the scene between Chimène and Elvire is shorter and is preceded by a first scene in which the Comte and Elvire hold the conversation which Elvire here reports to Chimène. Scudéry and the Academy both thought that to show Elvire (*cette suivante*) discussing affairs of state with the Comte was beneath the *dignity of tragic composition*.

3 à moi-même: the emphatic possessive pronoun expressed in modern French by *à moi*. In English we should say 'my feelings too.' — **encor**: the final *e* is often dropped from *encore* in poetry to avoid the extra syllable.

5 à lire: for the modern *en lisant*; many examples of this usage will be noted in this and other works of this period.

16 me penche: a number of verbs like *pencher, prospérer, tomber*, etc. often possessed a transitive force equivalent to the modern French *faire pencher* etc.

20 à: this use of *à* instead of *pour* is quite characteristic of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

29 n'a trait: for *n'a aucun trait*. Up to the sixteenth century *ne* alone expressed negation. Modern usage took form during the seventeenth.

37 du fils: *de* is used much more freely in cases like this with the meaning 'of,' 'in regard to,' 'on the part of,' etc. than in modern French, where this use of the preposition is quite restricted.

43 à son fils: 'for his son'; *à* was often used in the seventeenth century to denote the end or purpose of an action, where in modern French *pour* would be used.

50 au sortir: in modern French the infinitive is, for the most part, used only as the subject or object of a verb, but in Corneille's time it filled all the uses of a noun. *Au sortir du conseil*, 'at the going out of the council,' 'at the end of the council.'

62 même désir: the article was omitted quite generally before *même* in the seventeenth century.

78 à la tenir: again instead of modern *en* with the present participle.

87 s'oublier: with this exclamatory infinitive compare the exclamatory infinitive "to think" in the English equivalent 'to think that a great princess should' etc.

94 le seul mérite: the meaning of adjectives did not depend on their position as in modern French; so *le seul mérite* is here equivalent to the modern *le mérite seul* 'merit alone,' 'merit in itself.'

103 liens: this noun is an exception to the rule that a word whose only vowels are *ien* is a monosyllable.

117 contraigne: the original verse was *Je suis au désespoir que l'amour me contraigne*, where the use of the subjunctive is of course quite clear. In substituting the phrase *Je vois avec chagrin que*, the poet was probably thinking rather of the meaning than of the changed grammatical relation of the sentence; i.e., the idea of the modifying phrase became embodied in the verb, which is naturally followed by the indicative. Or

it may have been a mere oversight, helped on by the necessities of the rime and by the general tendency of the period to use the subjunctive after all expressions of joy or sorrow, etc.

121 *et souhaite*: since the Academy criticized the poet for not repeating the object *le* before the second verb *souhaite*, it is evident that Corneille's construction was becoming obsolete.

124 II: antecedent *cet hymen*, verse 121. Reread this passage in the light of what is said about social ideals on p. xxiii of the Introduction.

135 "This verse," said Scudéry, "is, if I am not mistaken, little better than mere nonsense." We may agree with him, but such plays on words (or *pointes*, as they were called) were looked upon at the time as one of the finest ornaments of lyric poetry: for example, *Je meurs de désir, en vivant d'espérance* (Bertaut), or

Mais dans les maux dont je me sens périr,
Je suis si content de mourir,
Que ce plaisir me redonne la vie. (Voiture.)

Nearly all of the sentimental utterances of the Infante are quite typical of the love-lorn lyric poetry of the period.

138 *dedans*: in the seventeenth century *dedans* was frequently used as a simple preposition like modern *dans*.

SCENES I-II: these two first scenes were suppressed during the eighteenth century on the ground that they added nothing to the piece. However, the interest of the drama as well as the integrity of the text demanded their restoration. They are very severely condemned by Voltaire, whose remarks should suggest something of the attitude of earlier French poets and critics toward the drama as a work of art. "This is an intolerable defect for us. The stage remains empty; the scenes are not bound together, the action is interrupted. Why do the actors of the preceding scenes go away? Why do these new actors come on? How can the one go away without seeing the others? How can Chimène see the Infante without saluting her? This great defect was common to all Europe, and the French alone have corrected themselves. The more difficult it is to bind the scenes together, the more meritorious is the overcoming of this difficulty. But it must not be overcome at the expense of interest and probability."

157 This *pour* + adjective + *que* + subjunctive, denoting concession, — 'however great kings may be,' — like *si grands que, quelque grands que*, while adjudged obsolete by Voltaire, has regained ground. — Note in reading this verse that the mute *e* of *ent* in *soient* does not

ever, at all), and the negative is permitted to lie in a verb phrase of negative implication (*perdu le cœur*): 'they have lost the courage of any longer venturing against.'

613-630 Corneille's remark on this passage in his "Examen" illustrates the difficulties which the observance of the unities laid upon poets: "I laid the scene in Seville, although Don Fernand was never master of it; I was forced to this falsification (of history) in order to make the incursion of the Moors seem probable, because their army could not come as quickly by land as by water."

607-632 Sainte-Beuve said of this scene: "All this, of course, is to prepare for the approaching exploit of Rodrigue. But it is hard to see why the king, once warned, takes no precaution and postpones everything to the next day; a strange monarch, far too easy-going." The Academy made a very similar criticism, and it is doubtless true, if one stops to reason about it. Can the movement of the play be depended upon to cover up this alleged defect?

637 *toute*: *tout* was usually given its adjectival ending in Corneille's time even when used adverbially.

647 "The first word of Chimène is to demand justice against a man whom she adores; it is perhaps the most beautiful of situations. Will Chimène secure the death of the Cid? Who will carry the day, she or Don Diègue? All minds are in suspense, all hearts are moved." (Voltaire.)

654 *il n'est point*: equivalent frequently in elevated discourse to *il n'y a point*.

669 *à ce récit*: another example of *à* where we should expect *pour*.

691 *en la mort*: instead of *par la mort*, as occasionally in the seventeenth century.

696 The foregoing verses, as well as those of the preceding speech of Chimène, have been severely criticized on the ground of their artificiality. They are said to be too artificial and too adroit for utterances of profound grief, which for its highest expression demands simplicity. It is noteworthy that these verses were among those least severely criticized at the time; no criticism, in fact, being offered of verses 659-670. Verses 673 ff. elicited from the Academy the remark: "Chimène appears too subtle in all this passage for one in affliction." The criticism is not unfounded. At the same time it might be considered a fine dramatic touch. Chimène, while true to her conception of her duty, dreads to see her prayer for vengeance granted. Rhetoric then must cover up the lack of genuineness in her pleading. Whether

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Lyric monologues like this had come to take the place of the chorus which had been adopted from the Greeks during the Renaissance period in France. They, in turn, were soon to go out of fashion. Corneille remarks apropos of the "Clitandre" that these monologues were popular then (1632) and that the actors demanded them because they thought to appear in them to greater advantage. But in the *Examen* to the "Andromède," written about thirty years after the "Cid," he declares that "too much affectation must be avoided. For this reason the stanzas of the 'Cid' are inexcusable, and the words *peine* and *Chimène* which form the last rime of each stanza reveal a trick of the poet which has nothing natural on the part of the actor." D'Aubignac in his "Pratique du théâtre" (1657), after making practically the same criticism of dramatic monologues, goes on to say, referring to these stanzas: "The stanzas of Rodrigue in which he wavers between his love and his duty have delighted all the court and all Paris."

294 *rigueur*: supply some phrase like 'of fate,' 'of destiny.'

322 *Je dois à*: an absolute use of *devoir*, 'to be in duty bound' ('toward, à); i.e., 'unto my mistress am I in duty bound as well as to my father.'

337 *penser*: another striking use of the infinitive as a noun (cf. note to verse 50). 'This seductive thought.'

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ACT II

368 These verses are said to have been followed by four others which were suppressed after the first representation of the play, but which have been handed down by tradition. They read:

Ces satisfactions n'apaisent point une âme:
Qui les reçoit n'a rien, qui les fait se diffamer,
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Est de perdre d'honneur deux hommes au lieu d'un.

These verses were probably removed because they might seem like a defense of the very common practice of dueling, against which the authorities were taking the most strenuous measures (cf. *Intr.*, p. xxiv). To give up these lines must have been something of a sacrifice, for words like these went directly to the hearts of many whom the poet would have liked to please. "They might have thought themselves *listening to the words of a Montmorency, of a Lesdiguières, of a*

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Rohan: thus had spoken only yesterday the last great lords. They must have listened not without a certain quiver to the echo of that feudal arrogance which Richelieu had hardly yet succeeded in humbling and crushing out." (Sainte-Beuve.)

370 Some have seen in these verses a bit of flattery to the then king of France. But as a matter of fact they are a genuine expression of the poet's political convictions. They also represent the point of view of a majority of the French people of that time. The absolutism of the king was a natural outgrowth of very real causes, a reaction against a dark and disastrous period of anarchy and disorganization. With the exception of the nobles, who lost thereby their power and importance, the people were thoroughly in sympathy with the principle. Corneille accepted it with entire consistency. Cf. Karl Zeiss, "Die Staatsideen Pierre Corneilles," p. 57 ff.)

373 *sur cette confiance*: some verb or verbal expression may well be supplied, e.g. *en vous appuyant sur* etc.; '(if you depend) upon this trust (in your past services), my lord, then you are lost.'

374 See vocabulary under *croire* and *expérience*.

376 *seul*: note position; cf. verse 94 and note.

383 *esprits*: an example of Corneille's frequent use of the plural where we should expect the singular.

390 According to an ancient superstition, laurel was a sure protection against lightning strokes.

399 *la même vertu*: *même* meaning 'itself' frequently preceded the word instead of following it as in modern French. One might freely translate "virtue (valor) personified."

403 *fais*: the present for the future, as in modern familiar expressions.

405 *aux*: à where we should expect *dans*; often so in the seventeenth century. Cf. verses 419, 428.

407 *à*: à is also used in a number of expressions where we should expect *avec*, as here.

417 The *de* which in modern French connects *rien* with its modifying adjective (*impossible*) might be omitted or expressed, usage not yet having become fixed on that point.

430 A French critic has complained that most actors fail to bring out the "exquisite modulation" of these lines; that is, the modulation in the sentiments expressed by them. The student should study them carefully, for upon touches like these depends the highly artistic character of the French classic drama.

434 à vaincre : note again this use of *à* + infinitive for modern *en* + present participle.

441 Note how unanimously the characters agree on the hero's duty. Nobody, characters nor spectators, could permit Rodrigue to overlook the insult offered his father. He must avenge it or die in the attempt. Hence it was that "all these lords and courtiers made the Cid's quarrel their own; before these scenes of challenge and disobedience I fancy that a quiver ran through the audience; among the rows of the young nobility they must have exchanged significant glances. It was an *à propos*, a redoubling of interest; they were on pins and needles, as it were. At this point more than one sword-blade must have burned in the scabbard." (Sainte-Beuve.)

447 pour : causal, as often in modern French; 'through,' 'by seeing it deferred.'

454 que : this use of *que* for *où* was common in the seventeenth century. It often occurs in familiar expressions in modern French as well.

459 impitoyable à : in modern French we find *pour* or *envers* after adjectives of this kind.

475 le plus fort : at first sight this seems to be an absolute superlative: "your very strong love," "your very great passion;" it might be preferable to regard it as a comparative: "we shall see your love, the stronger (of the two passions), put an end to this discord."

485 te : when a verb governed an infinitive directly, the whole was considered as one expression, and the pronominal object of either verb preceded the governing verb. In modern French this usage obtains only when the governing verb is *voir*, *entendre*, *envoyer*, *sentir*, *laisser*, or *faire*.

493 Chimène à l'âme haute : remember in translating such expressions that the French use *have* where we use *be* with the qualifying predicate adjective. 'Chimène's soul is lofty,' 'noble.'

500 l'amenez : when two imperatives were connected by *et*, *ou*, etc., the pronoun regularly preceded the second verb; a construction now archaic.

503 qui semblaient : common construction corresponding to English present participle construction; 'alone and seeming to be (or 'apparently') quarreling with voices lowered.'

504 Note the fine dramatic effect of this verse with its detached *il n'en faut plus parler*. 'No doubt they are fighting; let's say no more.' In other words, "my fears are justified, my hopes are gone," but how

much more effectively implied by the indefinite *en* before *faut*, which, having no direct antecedent, may suggest all the happiness the heroine had but just thought to be within her grasp.

519 *d'un*: translate *de* with *défendu*, 'against.'

523-526 Note the conceits, *charmant poison, le malade qui aime sa maladie*, etc. This sort of over-refinement in expression is known as the *précieuse* fashion; it furnished the theme for much of Molière's satire. Such conceits, or *pointes* as they were called, came into French lyric poetry largely through the imitation of Petrarch during the latter part of the sixteenth century. The substitution of this sort of ingenuity for real sentiment is one of the main reasons why there was so little lyric poetry of value produced during this period in which so many French classics were created.

532 *dessous*: *dessous* and *dessus* were used as prepositions early in the century, but in the later works of our poet they appear generally as adverbs, thus conforming to modern usage. A striking example of how rapidly the language was developing.

537 *persuade*: note the syllabication, *per-su-ade*; *ua* is always dissyllabic in French, except after *q* and in *lingual* and some words borrowed from the Spanish.

538 *au*: *à* was often used where we should expect *sur*.

538, 541 Grenade, Portugal: historically Granada was the most remote from Castile and the Cid of all the Moorish kingdoms. Though its mention (cf. verse 197) may be defended as a logical result of Corneille's decision to transfer the capital of Castile to Seville (see p. 108), and though the Cid did once help the Moorish king of Seville to defeat the king of Granada, it seems probable that Corneille's references to Granada are really due to the fact that this, being the longest-lived of the Moorish kingdoms in Spain, was the one best known to Corneille and his audience. Portugal did not begin to exist as a separate state till after the Cid's death.

542 *delà les mers*: *dépà* and *delà* were pure prepositions. In modern French we should have *au delà des mers*.

547 *où*: here equivalent to *à quoi, jusqu'où*, i.e. *jusqu'à quels exploits*, a usage frequent in the seventeenth century.

SCENE V: the Infanta's part has always been unfavorably criticized. Sainte-Beuve makes merry over the seductive dreams in which she indulges. The character, however, offered great possibilities. Had the poet gone on from the point arrived at in this scene to make her the active rival of *Chimène*, she could have contributed greatly to the action.

of the play. But to have developed her love for Rodrigue would have been contrary to the convention of the unity of action (cf. Intr., p. x), and, according to the sentiments of the times, would have detracted from the interest in the main action, the love of Chimène and Rodrigue. Corneille in later years came to regret having introduced her in the play at all. "Aristotle severely blames detached episodes, and says that inferior poets make them through ignorance, and the good in favor of the actors, to give them something to do. The Infanta of the 'Cid' is of this number." And Scudéry in his "Observations on the Cid" declared that "it is clearly seen that D. Urraque (l'Infante) appears only to give a rôle to the actress Beauchâteau." Scudéry, while criticizing her part very severely, admits that these episodes were very usual in pieces of those days.

560 *pouvoir*: this use of *pouvoir* indicates that the word, though used as noun, retained its verbal qualities: "I have done what I could."

565 *Qu'il*: the *que* is concessive: 'though he be,' 'be he.'

568 *ce que c'est que de*: as in modern French, *que de* before infinitive after *ce* subject of *être*. 'He shall see what it is to disobey,' 'he shall see what disobedience means.'

582 Don Sanche, having said *j'obéis et me tais*, keeps on talking. This alleged negligence of the poet is condemned by the Academy and Voltaire.

588 The censure of the French Academy on this passage is also characteristic of the spirit of the time. "Don Sanche, in this passage, shows very little judgment when he dares to tell the king that the count objects to the tyranny of paying him the respect which he owes him, and still less when he adds that it would have been cowardice on the part of the count to obey his king." With regard to this criticism Voltaire observes that "those who drew up these remarks had a different notion of the royal power from that which the warriors of the thirteenth century had." Voltaire's remark is irrelevant, for it was a generally accepted doctrine in Corneille's time that the poet could and should "correct" history provided he did not alter well-known historical events.

593 *à l'âge*: usually implies old age, instead of youth as here.

603 *d'honneur*: *de*, as frequently, 'in respect to,' equivalent to the Latin ablative of specification.

612 *de se plus hasarder*: we have here a primitive stage in the negative use of *plus*. In this phrase *plus* is treated not as intrinsically negative but as a word to be modified by a negative (as, in English, *any*,

ever, at all), and the negative is permitted to lie in a verb phrase of negative implication (*perdu le cœur*): 'they have lost the courage of any longer venturing against.'

613-620 Corneille's remark on this passage in his "Examen" illustrates the difficulties which the observance of the unities laid upon poets: "I laid the scene in Seville, although Don Fernand was never master of it; I was forced to this falsification (of history) in order to make the incursion of the Moors seem probable, because their army could not come as quickly by land as by water."

607-632 Sainte-Beuve said of this scene: "All this, of course, is to prepare for the approaching exploit of Rodrigue. But it is hard to see why the king, once warned, takes no precaution and postpones everything to the next day; a strange monarch, far too easy-going." The Academy made a very similar criticism, and it is doubtless true, if one stops to reason about it. Can the movement of the play be depended upon to cover up this alleged defect?

637 *toute*: *tout* was usually given its adjectival ending in Corneille's time even when used adverbially.

647 "The first word of Chimène is to demand justice against a man whom she adores; it is perhaps the most beautiful of situations. Will Chimène secure the death of the Cid? Who will carry the day, she or Don Diègue? All minds are in suspense, all hearts are moved." (Voltaire.)

654 *il n'est point*: equivalent frequently in elevated discourse to *il n'y a point*.

669 *à ce récit*: another example of *à* where we should expect *pour*.

691 *en la mort*: instead of *par la mort*, as occasionally in the seventeenth century.

696 The foregoing verses, as well as those of the preceding speech of Chimène, have been severely criticized on the ground of their artificiality. They are said to be too artificial and too adroit for utterances of profound grief, which for its highest expression demands simplicity. It is noteworthy that these verses were among those least severely criticized at the time; no criticism, in fact, being offered of verses 659-670. Verses 673 ff. elicited from the Academy the remark: "Chimène appears too subtle in all this passage for one in affliction." The criticism is not unfounded. At the same time it might be considered a fine dramatic touch. Chimène, while true to her conception of her duty, dreads to see her prayer for vengeance granted. Rhetoric then must cover up the lack of genuineness in her pleading. Whether

the passage is due to the poet's dramatic instinct or to the prevailing "préciosité" of the time is another question.

714 *descendaient*: the imperfect, as occasionally also in modern French, is to be translated by the conditional perfect; 'would have gone down to the tomb.'

718 *lavé ma honte*: in the Spanish play Don Diègue appears with his face reddened; i.e., his insult is visibly washed away in the blood of his offender.

731 *rigoureux*: note the position. There is a suggestive bit of history connected with the occurrence of this word here. Corneille first wrote *Et loin de murmurer d'un injuste décret*. The Academy objected that "he offends the king by representing him as capable of making an unjust decree." Accordingly the poet substituted *rigoureux* in later editions.

732 "Don Diègue's reply is of the highest beauty and the loftiest sentiments; it is full of a superb bitterness; his language is the real language of the great Corneille." (Sainte-Beuve.)

ACT III

SCENE I: Scudéry, followed by the Academy, inveighed against the impropriety of the first scenes of Act III. Corneille in the "Examen" makes this defense: "I have noticed in the early representations that when this unhappy lover appeared before Chimène a sort of tremor passed over the audience which gave evidence of a remarkable curiosity and an increase of attention to hear what they would have to say to each other in such a distressing situation."

754 *de mériter*: we should expect a clause, or *en* with the present participle or *pour* with the infinitive; 'in (or 'by') meriting her hatred I merit death.'

770 *y*: having *ici* for an antecedent, must be rendered 'here' and not 'there' as usual.

771 *voi*: the omission of *s* from the first person singular present of verbs of the third conjugation and of verbs in *oir* is common in the seventeenth century.

779 *à venger*: *à* was often used in the seventeenth century in place of modern *pour* to express purpose.

781 *Malheureuse!* the exclamation is eloquent of the entire hopelessness of the heroine's destiny. She has lost her father, must lose her lover, and must accept for the accomplishment of this end one for whom she has no respect, or at least to whom she is entirely indifferent.

787 *la vole en*: 'the way of it,' i.e. 'this way' (is surer etc.).

789 *vous*: note the dative use; 'if this pity for my misfortunes abides (*dure*) in you,' i.e. 'if you still feel this pity for my misfortunes.'

791 *où*: equivalent to *auquel*.

798 *a sa trame coupée*: this position of the noun object between the auxiliary and the past participle was quite common in the seventeenth century. Cf. below, verse 805.

807 *qu'un tourment*: this *que* is equivalent to *ne . . . que*, 'but,' 'except,' usage similar to that noted in the case of *de se plus hasarder* of verse 612. In this case the negative usually expressed by *ne* is felt in the *que dois-je espérer . . .*, a question implying a negative answer.

825 *Pensez*: *penser* followed directly by the infinitive means 'intend,' 'propose.'

832 *criera*: only two syllables, in accordance with the general rule for mute *e* after a vowel in syllables not final. In early editions it was printed *crîra*. — *orrai*: the future of the verb *ouïr*, cf. Vocabulary.

843 *de quoi que*: concessive; should be translated freely, 'whatever,' 'in whatever way,' 'however.'

848 A much admired verse. "All the unity and all the perfection of the French 'Cid' is contained in this verse." (Sainte-Beuve.)

851 *vo!*: see note to verse 771.

854 *perte*: though this sense of *perte* occurs elsewhere (e.g. verse 1090), it is much less familiar than the sense 'loss.' The noun is here an echo of *perdre* in verse 848. Verses 851–852 are neither addressed to Rodrigue nor answered by him, hence verses 849–850, 853–854, are substantially a continuous reply to *le poursuivre*, *le perdre*, in verse 848. — *vengeance*: probably, though not certainly, an echo of verse 842.

855 *Écoute*, 856 *Va*, 859 *Ote*: Rodrigue, in common with other heroes of Corneille's plays, seldom addresses the heroine in the familiar style. The heroines were, as a rule, more free. The gallantry of the time had given rise to the point of etiquette that a woman, as soon as she felt herself to be loved, had the right to treat her lover with a sort of patronizing familiarity, without his having the right to reciprocate; she becomes, as it were, his sovereign, he her vassal. Cf. *Intr.*, p. xxvi.

871 A great actor, Samson, gave the following advice concerning the interpretation of the following verses: "In depicting Rodrigue's respectful and tender grief take care not to descend to an insipid and plaintive tone; in everything that he says make the note of sadness apparent, not that of repentance."

making him do less than he should, when, the sword having fallen from his hands, and the Count *having haughtily pushed it away with his foot*, he (the poet) does not have him (Don Diègue) pick it up to avenge himself." After several verbal changes the whole passage is canceled, possibly because of the evident injustice of charging the poet with what might have been merely a bit of stage business on the part of the actor. This byplay has, I believe, never been reproduced, nor has this passage been cited in this connection.

SCENE III: a comparison of this scene with the corresponding scene of the Spanish original by Guillen de Castro (cf. Intr., p. xix) is suggestive of the difference between the more classical treatment of the French poet and the more romantic methods of the Spaniard. In Guillen de Castro this scene takes place in the king's council. The king announces to his counselors his choice of Diego Lainez as tutor for his son. The counselors not concerned praise his choice, but the count speaks bitterly against it, objecting the age of Diego as in Corneille. Don Diego replies, and directly the dialogue is ablaze with resentment:

THE COUNT: I deserved it—

THE KING: Vassals!

THE COUNT: As well as thou or better.

THE KING: Count!

DON DIEGO: Thou dost deceive thyself.

THE COUNT: I say—

THE KING: I am your king.

DIEGO: Say not—

THE COUNT: The hand shall say what the tongue keeps silent. (Gives him a blow.)

SCENE IV: while this feeling of debasement on the part of Don Diègue may seem exaggerated to us, it must be remembered that it did not strike the audiences who attended the early performances of the "Cid" in that way at all. Such ideas of honor and personal dignity actually prevailed, and the sympathy of the spectators with the old hero was no doubt real and strong. Cf. Intr., p. xxiii f.

SCENE V: for one more illustration of dramatic methods compare the corresponding scene in Guillen de Castro. In his drama we see the three sons of Don Diego, Hernan and Bermudo congratulating Roderigo on his elevation to knighthood. The father appears with his staff broken in twain; overwhelmed with shame and anger over the insult he has just received. He cuts short their anxious questions and *bids them leave his presence*. Then he takes down from the wall the

sword of the great Moorish warrior Mudarra and tries to wield it. His strength is gone, he totters and staggers under the momentum of the stroke which he essays. In desperation he calls in his eldest son Hernan. When he appears his father seizes his hand and crushes it in his grasp:

HERNAN: Let go! Let go!

DIEGO: Go away! Hold thy peace! I your father! It cannot be! Begone!

He calls in Bermudo and repeats the test with the same result:

DIEGO: Art thou a man? Begone! Infamy of my race!

Then Roderigo comes; the old man seizes his son's hand and bites his finger violently:

RODERIGO: Stop, father, stop! And were you not my father this hand should smite you.

And then much as in Corneille. The conventions did not allow the French poet to reproduce this highly dramatic if somewhat crude scene. Instead, the father could only ask Rodrigue *As-tu du cœur?* — the most provocative of questions, to be sure, that could be addressed to a young nobleman in those days.

280 *en dire*: this use of *en* ('of him') is an example of the frequent use of *en* referring to persons, contrary to general modern usage.

285 *et*: in the seventeenth century *et* was used regularly in the correlative expressions *plus . . . (et) plus*, 'the more . . . the more' (i.e. 'the greater'), *plus . . . (et) moins*.

289 *où*: in the seventeenth century *où* is equivalent not only to a relative pronoun plus a preposition (*dans*, *en*, etc.) in expressions of position or of time when, but also to the dative relation. So here it is equivalent to *auxquels*; 'misfortunes to which fate subjects me.'

SCENE VI: it will be noted that these stanzas are made up of 6-, 8-, 10-, and 12-syllable verses. The 6- and 8-syllable verses have no cæsura; in the 10-syllable verses it comes after the fourth syllable:

Percé jusques au fond du cœur
D'une atteinte imprévue || aussi bien que mortelle,
Misérable vengeur || d'une juste querelle,
Et malheureux objet || d'une injuste rigueur,
Je demeure immobile, || et mon âme abattue
Cède au coup qui me tue.
Si près de voir || mon feu récompensé,
O Dieu, l'étrange peine !
En cet affront || mon père est l'offensé,
Et l'offenseur || le père de Chimène !

Lyric monologues like this had come to take the place of the chorus which had been adopted from the Greeks during the Renaissance period in France. They, in turn, were soon to go out of fashion. Corneille remarks apropos of the "Clitandre" that these monologues were popular then (1632) and that the actors demanded them because they thought to appear in them to greater advantage. But in the *Examen* to the "Andromède," written about thirty years after the "Cid," he declares that "too much affectation must be avoided. For this reason the stanzas of the 'Cid' are inexcusable, and the words *peine* and *Chimène* which form the last rime of each stanza reveal a trick of the poet which has nothing natural on the part of the actor." D'Aubignac in his "Pratique du théâtre" (1657), after making practically the same criticism of dramatic monologues, goes on to say, referring to these stanzas: "The stanzas of Rodrigue in which he wavers between his love and his duty have delighted all the court and all Paris."

294 *rigueur*: supply some phrase like 'of fate,' 'of destiny.'

322 *Je dois à*: an absolute use of *devoir*, 'to be in duty bound' ('toward, à); i.e., 'unto my mistress am I in duty bound as well as to my father.'

337 *penser*: another striking use of the infinitive as a noun (cf. note to verse 50). 'This seductive thought.'

342 *avant qu'à ma maîtresse*: an elliptical expression which may be freely translated thus: 'my father's claims precede those of my mistress.'

ACT II

368 These verses are said to have been followed by four others which were suppressed after the first representation of the play, but which have been handed down by tradition. They read:

Ces satisfactions n'apaisent point une âme:
Qui les reçoit n'a rien, qui les fait se diffamer,
Et de pareils accords l'effet le plus commun
Est de perdre d'honneur deux hommes au lieu d'un.

These verses were probably removed because they might seem like a defense of the very common practice of dueling, against which the authorities were taking the most strenuous measures (cf. Intr., p. xxiv). To give up these lines must have been something of a sacrifice, for words like these went directly to the hearts of many whom the poet would have liked to please. "They might have thought themselves listening to the words of a Montmorency, of a Leadrighières, of a

Rohan: thus had spoken only yesterday the last great lords. They must have listened not without a certain quiver to the echo of that feudal arrogance which Richelieu had hardly yet succeeded in humbling and crushing out." (Sainte-Beuve.)

370 Some have seen in these verses a bit of flattery to the then king of France. But as a matter of fact they are a genuine expression of the poet's political convictions. They also represent the point of view of a majority of the French people of that time. The absolutism of the king was a natural outgrowth of very real causes, a reaction against a dark and disastrous period of anarchy and disorganization. With the exception of the nobles, who lost thereby their power and importance, the people were thoroughly in sympathy with the principle. Corneille accepted it with entire consistency. Cf. Karl Zeiss, "Die Staatsideen Pierre Corneilles," p. 57 ff.)

373 *sur cette confiance*: some verb or verbal expression may well be supplied, e.g. *en vous appuyant sur* etc.; '(if you depend) upon this trust (in your past services), my lord, then you are lost.'

374 See vocabulary under *croire* and *expérience*.

376 *seul*: note position; cf. verse 94 and note.

383 *esprits*: an example of Corneille's frequent use of the plural where we should expect the singular.

390 According to an ancient superstition, laurel was a sure protection against lightning strokes.

399 *la même vertu*: *même* meaning 'itself' frequently preceded the word instead of following it as in modern French. One might freely translate "virtue (valor) personified."

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405 *aux*: à where we should expect *dans*; often so in the seventeenth century. Cf. verses 419, 428.

407 *à*: à is also used in a number of expressions where we should expect *avec*, as here.

417 The *de* which in modern French connects *rien* with its modifying adjective (*impossible*) might be omitted or expressed, usage not yet having become fixed on that point.

430 A French critic has complained that most actors fail to bring out the "exquisite modulation" of these lines; that is, the modulation in the sentiments expressed by them. The student should study them carefully, for upon touches like these depends the highly artistic character of the French classic drama.

trumpets and calls and the noise of battle help make the impression realistic. As the severity of the classic conventions did not permit the French poets to represent action on the stage, these narrations had to be substituted. Corneille believed that narrations of facts which had happened anterior to the action represented on the stage were to be avoided; but the narrations "which are made of events which take place behind the stage after the action has begun always produce a better effect because they are awaited with some curiosity and form a part of the action which is being represented." This suggests the difference between the French and English understanding of stage action.

1331 "From the epic we fall back into tragi-comedy; it is a striking contrast between the manly resolution of Rodrigue and the embarrassed hesitations of the king, who is reminded of his duty when he would like to forget it." (Note of Hémon.)

1334 *avant que sortir*: instead of *avant que de sortir* as in verse 1288; both expressions were considered more correct than the modern *avant de*; Corneille usually preferred *avant que de*.

1337 *œil*: synecdoche, i.e. by "eye" is meant the expression of the whole face; 'put more sadness into your looks.'

1341 *en*: remember that *en* referred to persons as well as things; so here, 'avenged you on him.'

1358 *dérobait*: translate by the conditional perfect, 'would have shielded'; cf. verses 715 and 886.

1364 *au lit d'honneur*: instead of more common *au champ d'honneur*; 'on the field of honor.'

1372 *fleurs, lauriers*: note the antithesis. The heads of sacrificial victims were bedecked with flowers; the heads of victors were crowned with laurel.

1388 *même*: note again this characteristic use in the meaning of 'itself' or 'even,' which it has in modern French only when following the noun modified.

1406 *vieille coutume*: that is, the medieval privilege of the weak to seek a champion who should prove in a duel the righteousness of his cause. For the king's excuse which follows, and the close relation of the whole to the special conditions of the time, see Intr., p. xxiv.

1424 *brave homme*: in the seventeenth century *brave* before the noun, as well as after it, meant 'courageous.'

1436 *s'oserait prendre à lui*: i.e. *oserait se prendre à lui*, 'would dare contend against him'; in modern French *se prendre à* has weakened to 'find fault with,' 'accuse,' 'blame.'

1449 The preoccupation of the poet and his audience for the observance of the dramatic conventions is very well brought out by the poet's comment on this verse in his "Discours de la Tragédie." "I have always repented of having had the king say in the 'Cid' that Rodrigue should rest an hour or two after the defeat of the Moors before fighting Don Sanche. I did it to show that the piece observed the rule of the twenty-four hours, but it only served to show the spectators with what difficulty I had observed it. If I had had the combat take place without designating the time, perhaps no one would have noticed it."

1457 *même*: 'the same' — note again the omission of the article.

1464 This decree of the king was severely condemned by the Academy, which judged that "it forms the *dénouement* of the piece, and forms it badly, contrary to art." Modern critics have been more lenient. Compare with it the *dénouement* of Molière's "Tartuffe."

ACT V

1467 *vous*: note the position, separated so far from the verb of which it is the indirect object (*dire*).

1486 *seule*: here used in the sense of *propre*; 'my own quarrel.'

1496 *à qui*: as sometimes in modern French, for *à celui qui*.

1499 *estomac*: this word did not then possess the unæsthetic significance of modern usage, which prefers *poitrine* for 'bosom,' 'breast.'

1513 *je t'en vois cependant faire*: for *je te vois cependant en faire*.

1522 "This verse is equally dexterous and impassioned; it is full of art, but of that art which nature inspires." (Voltaire.)

1527 *cieux*: one syllable by the general rule for *ieu*; the same letters in the next verse make two syllables by the special rule for adjectives with the suffix *eux*.

1529 *veuillez*: the present subjunctive, in place of modern *voulez*. The subjunctive form of *vouloir* was not yet fixed.

1546 Here again we see seventeenth-century ethics set forth in the strongest light. To put glory and honor above everything, even love, for which the hero is only too glad to die, — all this is characteristic of the professed ideals of the period, and one must be on his guard against looking upon it as something stagey and exaggerated. See Intr., p. xxvi.

1557 Voltaire thought this perhaps the most beautiful verse in the piece.

1564 *c'est trop peu que de vous*: 'you are too few.' "I do not know why this passage has been suppressed in the representations . . ."

this enthusiasm of valor and hope unbecoming in the Cid encouraged by his mistress?" (Voltaire.) However these verses may have impressed the general public in Voltaire's day, they rang true in Corneille's time, as they do to this day. Compare the similar situation in "Cyrano de Bergerac." Cyrano has just been led to believe that Roxane looks upon him with favor. Filled with the enthusiasm of this hope he goes to fight the hundred ruffians who are lying in ambush to administer a beating to Lignière:

"Follow at a distance and you shall be witnesses!

"CUIGY. But a hundred men! . . .

"CYRANO. This evening I would not have less."

1565 *respect de*: 'respect (or 'regard') for,' now obsolete.

1577 *à*: another example of the free use of *à*; 'for how many sighs must my heart be prepared.'

1588 *sur qui*: i.e., the Moorish title forebodes a sovereignty over the Moors; a prediction which came true when the Cid, with seven thousand mostly Moorish followers, took the Moorish city of Valencia and reigned there till his death.

1599 *viendrait*: the conditional to denote conjecture or possibility. 'Whence could this repose come,' 'whence comes, think you, this repose,' at the time of my greatest distress?

1600 The quotation of words spoken so far back as verse 108 is made more justifiable by the fact that everything is supposed to have happened within twenty-four hours.

SCENES II-III: these two scenes have been looked upon as mere padding introduced to give Rodrigue time to overcome Don Sanche. They have been defended on the ground that they offer a brief emotional respite, an æsthetic pause before the finale of the piece.

1646 *je ne sais qu'espérer*: the *que* is relative, not negative with *ne*; 'I know not what to hope.'

1647 *où*: again equivalent to *auquel*.

1680 *vouloir*: for the noun, where we should have in modern French *la volonté*. In translating verses 1679 and 1680 one must first reconstruct the French: *celle (la loi) du combat et le vouloir du roi ne sont pas assez pour leur (à mon devoir et à ma perte) faire la loi*.

1737 *où*: here equivalent to *dans laquelle*.

1751 *mon devoir*: this has been criticized as an awkward explanation of the absence of Rodrigue. But it is prepared for by verse 1456, where the king commands that the victor of the duel shall be brought

to him, i.e. to his palace. The action on the stage is taking place in the palace (*maison*) of Chimène.

1753 This was, as a matter of fact, the custom in affairs of this sort.

1768 *que mettre*: instead of *que de mettre*, the usual construction.

1778 *tout de nouveau*: an adverbial expression identical with the modern *de nouveau*.

1780 Rodrigue here echoes words which he did not hear (verse 1680). Such a repetition may be compared to a leitmotif in music, a phrase "accompanying, by way of expression or allusion, the reappearance of a certain idea, person, or situation"; or to the practice of the Greek lyric poets, by which a word strikingly associated with the thought of the poem is made to recur in a later strophe at the same place (the same foot of the same line of the strophe) in which an earlier strophe had had it.

1786 These verses are reminiscent of the exaggerated romanticism of the Spanish drama. "The love which they [the Spanish authors] portray," says Martineche, "harmonizes with the extravagance of their intrigues. When one is a prey to this exaltation, the reality will not satisfy. One dreams of magnificent adventures, of strange deeds of valor accomplished for the glory of his lady; and when these appear upon the stage no one questions whether they are probable, reason is not listened to, but the imagination becomes intoxicated before a spectacle in which the wildest dreams seem to come true." ("La comedia espagnole en France," p. 107.)

1798 Voltaire, commenting upon this verse, remarks: "the expression *se revancher* has become vulgar [i.e. popular, undignified]; we would now say *pour m'en récompenser*." This in turn has given way to *s'en dédommager*, 'make amends for.'

1812 The delicacy with which Corneille handled this difficult situation was greatly admired by Voltaire. "These last beautiful verses justify Chimène completely; she does not wed the Cid, she even remonstrates with the king. I confess that I cannot conceive how people have been able to accuse her of impropriety [as Scudéry and the Academy did] instead of pitying and admiring her. To be sure she says to the king 'it is my duty to obey,' but she does not say 'I shall obey.' The spectator, however, feels that she will obey; and it is in that, it seems to me, that the beauty of the dénouement consists."

NOTES ON THE EXAMEN

The text is that of the last edition printed during Corneille's lifetime, that of 1682. It differs only in a very few unessential details from the text of the edition of 1660.

103 4 *au plaisir*; object of *laissé*; 'have let the pleasure which . . . *enlever leurs suffrages*.'

103 18-19 Aristotle, ch. 14, says that to excite pity and terror (the special emotions of tragedy) the normal and proper method is the use of calamities caused or threatened by "friends"; all the instances he cites are of near relatives.

103 24 Aristotle, ch. 13: tragedy must show the suffering "of a person neither eminently virtuous or just, nor yet involved in misfortune by deliberate vice or villainy, but by some error of human frailty."

104 1 *de vertu*: construe with *ce que*.

104 11 *il est*: equivalent to *il y a*.

104 13 Both Scudéry and the Academy were very severe in their criticisms on this point. The Academy opined that Chimène's manners were, if not scandalous, at least depraved.

105 18 Academy: "We confess that the truth of this adventure is in the poet's favor, and makes him more excusable than if it were an invented subject. But we maintain that not all truths are good for the stage, and that there are some which resemble those awful crimes of which the judges have the evidence burned along with the criminals. There are monstrous truths which must be suppressed for the good of society, or which, if they cannot be kept concealed, must be noted as exceptional events. It is chiefly on these occasions that the poet has a right to prefer the probable to the true, and to work rather upon a subject-matter invented and reasonable than upon a true one which does not conform to reason. And if a historical matter of this sort must be treated it should be reduced to the terms of propriety without regard to the truth, and the poet ought to change it entirely rather than leave in it anything incompatible with the rules of his art, which consists in setting forth the universal idea of things, purifying them of their defects and *irregularities which history, by the severity of its laws, is constrained to*

follow. So that it would have been far more becoming in the arrangement of the 'Cid' to pretend, contrary to the fact, that the Count had proved not to be the real father of Chimène; or that, contrary to the opinion of all, he had not died of his wounds; or that the salvation of the king and his kingdom had absolutely depended upon this marriage, in order to make up for the violence which nature would suffer on this occasion by the good which the state and its prince would receive from it. All that, we say, would have been more pardonable than to bring upon the stage the event all exact and scandalous as history furnished it. But the most expedient thing would have been not to make a dramatic poem upon it, since it was too well known to be changed in such an essential point and too demoralizing as an example to be exposed to the view of the people without first being rectified."

105 26 Scudéry most severely condemned upon moral grounds the scenes containing the visits of Rodrigue to his mistress, after admitting that they were the scenes which had made the people clap their hands and cry "Miracle." The Academy concurred, though more soberly, and, foreseeing Corneille's defense, concluded: "If it is alleged in its defense that this passion of Chimène has been the principal attraction of the piece and that which has gained the most applause, we shall answer that it is not because it is good, but because, bad as it is, it is happily expressed. Her strong impulses, joined to her naïve and affecting expressions, have caused to be esteemed what would really be estimable if it were a separate piece and not part of a whole which cannot endure it; in a word, it has sufficient charm to have made those forget the rules who did not know or well remember them."

106 6 Aristote dit: toward the end of ch. 24.

106 21 That is to say, tastes had become less extravagant, and under a more settled and peaceful régime society had come to prefer less startling and more natural situations.

106 27 ailleurs: "Discours du poème dramatique." "These episodes may be of two kinds: they may have to do with individual actions of the principal actors, not necessary to the principal action, or with the interests of the second pair of lovers, commonly called episodic characters. Both kinds ought to have their foundation in the first act, and to be attached to the principal action — that is, they should fulfill some purpose in it; in particular those episodic characters should be so thoroughly bound up with the principal characters that they are all involved in a single intrigue. Aristotle severely blames detached episodes, and says that inferior poets make them through ignorance, and the good in

favor of the actors, to give them something to do. The Infanta of the 'Cid' is of this number, and may under this text of Aristotle be condemned or pardoned according to the rank which may be allotted to me among our modern poets."

106 29 Scudéry: "The author will permit me to tell him that he is evidently not acquainted with the ways of the world. When two nobles have a quarrel and the honor of one is offended, they are individuals who are not allowed at large: the prince gives them both guards who answer for their persons, and who would not permit the son of one to challenge the other. So we see clearly the dangerous consequences by which this error is followed; and by the maxims of conscience the king or the author is guilty of the count's death, unless they offer as an excuse that they were not thinking about it, for the king is too late in ordering the arrest of the parties concerned." The Academy concurred, and claimed that the king should have sent guards to prevent the consequences which might result from the resentment caused by the offense. He should furthermore have compelled the offender to repair the offense by a satisfaction worthy of the person offended.

107 16 Scudéry made merry over this point: "But I must say that never was a king so badly obeyed as Don Fernand, since, in spite of the order that had been given in the second act to fortify the port on account of the warning which he had received that the Moors were coming to attack him, it appears that Seville would have been taken, himself and his children lost, if chance had not brought together these dear friends of Don Diègue who aided Rodrigue in saving it." In this instance the Academy did not entirely support Scudéry: "As it is quite usual for good orders to be poorly obeyed, there was nothing so reasonable as to suppose that on this occasion Don Fernand might have been negligently served. However, the poet cannot defend himself with this reason; for, as a matter of fact, the king had given no orders to resist the Moors, for fear of giving the city too much alarm. It is true that the excuse is worse than the fault, for it would have been less objectionable if the king, having given good orders, should be poorly obeyed, than that he should perish through lack of having given any at all."

107 22 Scudéry contented himself with the remark, in passing, that the decree of Don Fernand was the most unjust that ever monarch had made. The Academy dwelt upon this point at greater length. "It cannot be denied that it is very unjust, and that Chimène commits a very great fault in not openly refusing to obey it. In any case, if the king wished that Chimène should consent to this marriage he should have

used persuasion rather than command. And this unreasonable and precipitate, and consequently improbable, decree is the more blameworthy in that it forms the dénouement of the piece and forms it badly and contrary to art. In any other part of the poem this strange proceeding would have produced an unpleasant effect, but here it spoils the whole edifice by putting it in the class of those poems which Aristotle condemns because they are complicated properly but resolved improperly."

107 30 Scudéry: "And truly all the fine deeds accomplished by the 'Cid' in several years are so violently brought together in this piece, to bring it under the rule of twenty-four hours, that the characters seem to be *dei ex machina* falling from heaven to earth. In the short space of a natural day a preceptor for the Prince of Castile is selected; a quarrel and a combat take place between Don Diègue and the Count, another combat between Rodrigue and the Count, another between Rodrigue and the Moors, another between Rodrigue and Don Sanche; and the marriage between Rodrigue and Chimène is concluded. I leave you to judge if that is not a day well filled out, and if it would not be very unjust to accuse all these characters of indolence." The Academy, while quibbling over a part of Scudéry's doctrine in this connection, upholds the criticism: "Surely the author cannot deny that he has been lacking in art when he has comprised so many remarkable actions in the space of twenty-four hours, and that he has been unable to furnish matter for the five acts of his piece otherwise than by heaping up so many events in so short a space of time."

108 10 Neither Scudéry nor the Academy criticized this point. Corneille seems unnecessarily punctilious, for the king had ended the first interview by promising to accord the heroine justice. Her zeal in seeking the fulfillment of this promise would not seem unnatural.

108 15 Corneille touched upon this point in his "Discours de la tragédie." "I am sure that if one narrated in a novel what I represent in the 'Cid,' 'Polyeucte,' 'Pompée,' or the 'Menteur,' he would give it a little more than the space of one day. The obedience which we owe to the rules of the unity of time and place [in the drama] authorizes us to neglect the probable, although it does not permit us the impossible." The continuation of this discussion is suggestive of the difficulty felt by Corneille in observing the rules. "We are under restraint in dramatic composition on account of the time, the place, and the incommodities of representation which prevent us from exposing to the sight of the audience many characters at the same time for fear that some may remain inactive or that they may disturb the action of the others."

108 20 These points were not criticized by Scudéry nor by the Academy; indeed the latter, by a remark made in another connection, furnished a justification of the poet's procedure: "The poet should not fear to commit a sacrilege in changing the facts of history. We are confirmed in this belief by the most punctilious of poets [Virgil], who, corrupting history, represented Dido as unchaste with no other necessity than that of embellishing his poem with an admirable episode."

108 31 ailleurs: "Discours des trois unités." Discussing the need of connecting the actions represented in a play, he had said that "the poet should remember that all actions should have such an inter-relation that they should seem to grow out of each other, and that they should have their source in the protasis which should come at the end of the first act. This rule, which I have established in my first Discourse ["Discours du poème dramatique"], although new and contrary to the usage of the ancients, has its basis in two passages of Aristotle. This is the first: 'There is a great difference between events which come after and those which cause each other.' And more specifically: 'all that takes place in a tragedy must grow necessarily or with probability out of that which precedes it.' The Moors of the 'Cid' come after the death of the Count, not because of it."

109 10 Scudéry: "The theatrical disposition of this piece is so badly managed that, the same place representing the king's apartment, that of the infanta, Chimène's house, and the street, almost without any change of aspect, the spectator does not know, the greater part of the time, where the actors are." The Academy shared this view: "As for the theatrical disposition, it is evident to every one that it is badly managed and that the same scene represents several different places. It is true that it is a defect which appears in most of our dramatic pieces, and to which it seems that the negligence of the poets has accustomed the spectators. But the author of the 'Cid,' having made such an effort to preserve the unity of time, should also have endeavored to observe the unity of place, which is quite as necessary as the other, and which, if not carefully observed, produces in the mind of the audience as much or more confusion and obscurity."

109 20 qu'il ne soit: that is, *sans qu'il ne soit*.

109 22 In the *Examen* of the "Galerie du palais" Corneille, commenting upon a somewhat similar license, remarks: "It is true that what they (the characters) say would be more properly said in a hall or room. . . . The spectators are so accustomed to it (this license) that it gives no disagreeable impression." He believes if the works of the

ancients were carefully examined it would be found that more than half of what the actors said would be better said in the house than on the conventional public square of their comedies and tragedies. But the criticism of Scudéry was not so much directed at an abuse of the convention as at the abrupt way in which the scenes of the "Cid" followed each other without any sort of transition. Compare Matzke, *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. XIII, no. 7, pp. 393-409.

110 11 *Hoc amet* etc. : 'The author may love this and despise that, he may neglect many things.'

110 14 *Semper* etc. : 'let him ever hasten toward the event.'

110 15 Scudéry inveighed against the unfortunate Don Diègue, "the most uncivil of mortals, who has left at his house five hundred gentlemen who had come to offer their sword." The Academy corrected both the poet and his critic. Scudéry's opinion was wrong because in a case like this the natural impulses and sentiments of a father do not take into account the obligations of external proprieties; they master those possessed by them without any one's finding fault. But he might properly have objected that there was no probability that, this great number of friends being in Don Diègue's house, they would have allowed him to leave his house unattended at such an hour to go in search of his son; not finding Rodrigue in his house, the proper thing would have been for them to prevent him from going and to relieve him of the trouble which the poet makes him take.

110 27 Scudéry declared that all the judicious persons in the audience were horrified at seeing Rodrigue come to seek Chimène in her house, while her father's dead body was still there.

VOCABULARY

[*adj.* = adjective; *adv.* = adverb; *f.* = feminine; *m.* = masculine; *obs.* = obsolete; *pl.* = plural; *pp.* = past participle; *prep.* = preposition; *pres. p.* = present participle; *sb.* = noun (substantive)]

à to, by, in, at, for, from; à ce peu from this (these) few	accommoder reconcile, settle; s'accommoder become reconciled, be adapted to
abaisser lower; s'abaisser abase one's self	accompagnement <i>m.</i> attendant, procession, troop
abandonner abandon, forsake, give up	accompagner accompany, attend, go with
abattre weaken, discourage, cast down, strike down; s'abattre be depressed, fall, fail, falter	accomplir accomplish, perfect
abattu afflicted, slain, oppressed	accord <i>m.</i> agreement, arrangement; d'accord agreed, in harmony (de with); être d'accord to admit
abîmer plunge	accorder grant, concede, harmonize; s'accorder be adjusted, be settled, harmonize
abolir abolish, annul (<i>in legal vocabulary this word meant blot out, efface the records of a crime</i>)	accoutumer accustom
abord <i>m.</i> descent (<i>earlier meaning of word</i>), attack, arrival; d'abord first, at first	accuser accuse, reproach (<i>de</i> for)
aborder approach	Achéron Acheron (the river over which the dead, according to Greek mythology, were ferried into the realm of Hades)
absent away	achever finish, accomplish, bring to pass, go on
absolu absolute	acquérir acquire, win, obtain
absurdité <i>f.</i> absurdity	acquitter acquit; s'acquitter to acquit one's self, to pay one's debts
abus <i>m.</i> abuse	acte <i>m.</i> act
abuser deceive, delude, take advantage; s'abuser be mistaken	acteur <i>m.</i> actor; premier acteur protagonist, chief character
accabler overwhelm, bury, overpower	
accepter accept, receive	
accommodement <i>m.</i> reconciliation	

- action** *f.* action, deed
adieu *m.* farewell
admettre admit, receive
admirer admire, behold, wonder at
adorer adore, worship
adoucir soothe, appease, calm
adresser address; *s'adresser* meddle (à with)
adversaire *m.* adversary
affaiblir weaken, enfeeble
affaire affair, matter (*in Corneille's time used in a more dignified sense than in modern French, where it is used almost as freely as the English "thing"*)
affermir affirm, assure, strengthen
affliger afflict, distress; *pour m'affliger* to my distress
affranchir deliver, free
affreux dreadful, awful, fearful
affront *m.* affront, insult, offense
afin: *afin de* in order to, to; *afin que* in order that
Africain African
âge *m.* age
agir act; *faire agir* bring into action, bring to bear; *s'agir de* be a question of, be necessary
agréable welcome, pleasing
agresseur *m.* aggressor
aide *f.* aid, help
aider aid, help, assist (à in)
aïeul *m.* ancestor, forefather
aigrir embitter, sting, irritate, increase
ailleurs elsewhere; *d'ailleurs* besides, moreover
aimable cherished, object of love, pleasing
aimer love
ainsi thus; *ainsi que* as well as
aisé easy
aisément clearly, easily, plainly
ajouter add
alarme *f.* alarm, call to arms, terror
alfange *m.* handjar
allégeance *f.* solace, relief
allègement *m.* solace, relief
allégresse *f.* joy, happiness, pleasure
aller go; *allons* come; *s'en aller* go away, depart; *il y va de* it is a question of, it concerns; *laisser aller* yield to
allumé (*pp. of allumer*) intense
allumer kindle, light, stir up
alors then; *alors que* when, at a time when (*often used for lorsque, by which it was, however, fast being supplanted*)
altier haughty, proud
amant lover, suitor
âme *f.* soul, heart
amener bring, lead
ami *m.* friend
amirauté admiralty
amitié *f.* friendship, affection
amorce *f.* allurements, wiles
amour love (*in early works Corneille makes amour either feminine or masculine, and contemporary authorities justified him. But usage was changing rapidly and approaching the modern*)
amoureux enamored, in love, passionate, tender; *sb.* lover
an *m.* year
ancien ancient, old, former; *sb. m.* man of old
ancrer anchor, drop anchor

Andalousie *f.* Andalusia (old province of Spain; capital Seville)

ange *m.* angel

animer animate, give life to, arouse

année *f.* year

apaiser appease, satisfy, soothe, calm

apercevoir perceive

apparence *f.* semblance, appearance, likelihood; **en apparence** apparently

appartement *m.* apartment

appas *m.* charms, allurements

appeler call, summon, challenge, call for

applaudir applaud, congratulate, commend

apporter bring

appréhension *f.* apprehension, fear

apprendre learn, teach, inform, tell

apprêter prepare (à for), make ready

approcher approach, be approaching

approuver approve of

appui *m.* support, protection, stay, protector

après after, toward; **après que** after; *adv.* afterward

Aragon Aragon (one of the old kingdoms of Spain)

arborer raise

archétype *m.* archetype, model

ardeur *f.* ardor, passion, spirit, love, desire, zeal

Aristote Aristotle

arme *f.* arm, weapon; **à la pointe des armes** at the sword's point (*modern à la pointe d'épée*)

armée *f.* army

armer arm; **tout armé** under arms, in full armor

arracher take, wrest (à from)

arrêt *m.* decree, sentence

arrêter stop, check, hold, keep, arrest, still, fix; **s'arrêter** stop

arrière back; **en arrière** backward

arrivée *f.* arrival

arriver arrive, happen

arrogant arrogant; *sb. m.* proud man

arroser water, sprinkle

art *m.* art

aile *m.* refuge, shelter, protection

assaillant assailing; aggressor

assassin *m.* assassin, slayer

assassiner kill, overwhelm, grieve, distress (*in the seventeenth century this word had nothing of its modern rather slangy significance 'to bore exceedingly'*)

assaut *m.* assault, onset, trial

assemblage *m.* union

assemblée *f.* assembly, audience

assembler assemble, gather, bring together, unite

asservir enslave

assez enough, well enough, well, quite, very; **assez de** enough, no lack of

assis seated

assurance *f.* assurance, confidence

assuré sure, certain, assured

assurer assure, insure, make sure, guarantee; **s'assurer** be sure

Asturies *f. pl.* Asturias (province on the northern coast of Spain)

attacher attach; **s'attacher à** ~~insist~~ upon

- attaquer** attack, assail; **s'attaquer à** interfere with, criticize
atteindre attain, come up to, equal, afflict, attack
atteinte *f.* blow, attack, hurt
attendant: **attendant que** until, till
attendre await, wait, expect
attentat *m.* outrage, deed of violence, crime, violation (sur of), infringement
attente *f.* hope, wish, desire, prospect
attirer attract, invite, gain
aucun any, any one, none; **aucun des deux** either; *was often used in affirmative sense*
audace *f.* audacity, temerity, boldness
audacieux audacious; *n.* upstart, hotspur
au-dessus above, superior to
audience hearing
auditeur auditor, hearer
augmenter increase, grow; **s'augmenter** increase, grow
augure *m.* omen, presage
auguste august
aujourd'hui to-day, this day, now; **dès aujourd'hui** this very day
auparavant before, beforehand; **d'auparavant** before
auprès de beside, to, in comparison with, among
aussi also, too, so, thus, as, besides; **aussi bien** moreover, and indeed
aussitôt at once, immediately; **aussitôt que** as soon as
autant as much, as well; **autant que** as much as, the same as, as well as; **d'autant plus** so much the more
auteur *m.* author
autoriser authorize, permit
autorité *f.* authority
autour de around, with
autre other, greater, superior; **l'un et l'autre** both; **tout autre que** any other than, any one but
autrefois once, formerly
autrement otherwise, besides, differently
autrui others
avancer advance, go on; **s'avancer** advance, go forward
avant before; **avant que** before; **plus avant** farther; **trop avant** too far
avantage advantage
avec with; **d'avec** from
avecque = **avec** (*especially before words beginning with a consonant; but Corneille used it in all positions*)
avenir *m.* future
aventure *f.* adventure, destiny, fate, fortune (*of less restricted meaning and of more dignified usage than in modern French*)
aversion *f.* aversion, hatred
avertir let know, warn, tell, admonish, announce to
aveuglement *m.* blindness
avis counsel, information, warning
aviser: **s'aviser** think, feel disposed
avocat attorney
avoir have, gain; **avoir beau** be in vain, in vain, to no purpose; **avoir besoin de** need; **avoir part à** share in; **avoir peur** be afraid.

- fear; **avoir soin** be mindful, take care, attend to; **avoir tort** be wrong (de in); **n'avoir point de bien** have no result, have no consequences
avouer admit, confess, acknowledge
- baigner** bathe, wet; **se baigner** bathe
baiser kiss
balance *f.* balance, scale; **mettre en balance** weigh
balancer waver, hesitate, be doubtful
bande *f.* band, troop
bannir banish
bas low, base, common; **tout bas** in low tones
bataille *f.* battle
bâtir build, build up
battre beat, clap, wash; **se battre** fight
beau beautiful, fair, fine, splendid, noble
beaucoup much, greatly
beauté *f.* beauty
besoin *m.* need, occasion; **au besoin** in time of need, in peril (*a quite frequent usage*); **avoir besoin de** need; **en ce besoin** in this time of need
bien *adv.* well, very, indeed, certainly, much, fully, of a truth, rather, perhaps, far, by far, quite, wholly; **bien que** although; **aussi bien** moreover, and indeed
bien *m.* welfare, weal, wealth, boon, happiness, gift, good; **homme de bien** good man, valiant man
bienséance *f.* propriety, decency
- bientôt** soon, very quickly
blâme *m.* blame, censure
blâmer blame, censure
blanc white
blanchir whiten, grow white, grow old
blesser pierce, wound
blessure *f.* wound
bon good
bonace *f.* calm, smooth sea (*often used in this sense by Corneille and his contemporaries. It is no longer so employed*)
bonheur *m.* happiness, good fortune
bonté *f.* goodness, kindness
bord *m.* shore
borne *f.* limit, end
borner limit, end
bouche *f.* mouth, lips
bouillant boiling, hot, impetuous, hot-headed
bouillon *m.* bubble, gush
bourreau *m.* executioner
bout *m.* end; **à bout** to extremities; **en venir à bout** succeed
bras *m.* arm
bravade *m.* bravado
braver brave, defy, despise, dare
brigade *f.* brigade, troop, band
brigue *f.* intrigue, cabal, effort, persuasive effort
brillant *adj.* brilliant; *sb. m.* splendor, charm
briller sparkle, glitter
briser break, shatter, dash in pieces
bruit *m.* noise, sound, rumor, report, talk, comment; **sans bruit** noiselessly, quietly
brûler burn

- cabinet** *m.* room (*i.e.* private room, whence modern meaning of study, office)
- cacher** hide, conceal
- calme** *m.* calm, repose, peace
- calmer** calm, appease, soothe, quiet
- camp** *m.* camp
- capitaine** *m.* captain
- capricieux** capricious
- captif** captive
- car** for, because
- caractère** *m.* character
- caresser** caress, cherish
- carnage** *m.* carnage, bloodshed
- carrière** *f.* career
- cas** *m.* attention, case; **faire cas de** esteem; **faire si peu cas de** care so little for
- casser** break, break down
- castillan** Castilian
- Castille** Castile (one of the old kingdoms of Spain)
- causer** cause, be the cause of
- cavalier** *m.* (*often in Corneille for chevalier*) knight, gentleman (*in modern French cavalier means* horseman, cavalryman)
- ce** this, that, it, they; **ce qui, ce que**, that which, what
- céder** yield, give way
- cela** that
- célèbre** eminent
- celer** conceal, hide
- celui, celle**, that one, this one; *pl.* these, those
- cent** hundred, one hundred, a hundred
- cependant** however, still, in the meantime, moreover; **cependant** que while (*for modern pendant que, en attendant que*)
- certain** certain, sure
- cesse** ceasing; **sans cesse** ever
- cesser** cease, end, stop, desist
- chacun** each one, every one
- chagrin** *m.* sorrow, grief
- chaîne** *f.* chain, bond
- chaleur** *f.* heat, fire, ardor, zeal, passion
- champ** *m.* field; **ouvrir le champ** open the lists (*i.e.* prepare for the duel)
- chandelle** *f.* candle; **moucheur de chandelles** candle-snuffer
- change** *m.* change, infidelity (*a common usage of the early seventeenth century*)
- changer (de)** change
- chanter** sing
- chaque** every, each
- char** *m.* chariot
- charger** burden, enter, come into, cover
- charmant** pleasing, charming, joyful
- charme** *m.* charm, joy
- charmer** charm, delight, enchant, enamor, enrapture, beguile
- chasser** drive away, dismiss
- châtiment** *m.* punishment, chastisement
- chaud** hot, warm
- chef** *m.* chief, head (*was already going out of use for tête; Scudéry criticized it, but it was accepted by the Academy in this sense*)
- chemin** *m.* way, method; **faire chemin** cover distance
- cher** dear, cherished, fond, precious (*often in sense of modern précieux*)

- chercher** seek, go in quest of, find, seek out
chèrement dearly, tenderly
chéri precious, cherished
cheval *m.* horse; **à cheval** on horseback
chevalier *m.* knight
cheveux *pl.* hair
chez at the house of, in the apartment of, in, among, within
choir fall (*coexistent in the seventeenth century with tomber, but now obsolete*); **laisser choir** abandon
choisir choose; **avoir à choisir** have a choice
choix *f.* choice
choquer break, displease, offend, shock
chose *f.* thing
Cid lord, master (*from Arabic sey-yid, colloquially sid*)
ciel *m.* heaven
cimeterre *m.* scimitar
cinq five
cinquante fifty
circonstance *f.* circumstance
clarté *f.* light
cloître *m.* cloister
cœur *m.* (*in the seventeenth century often synonymous with courage*) heart, courage, feeling, spirit; **de cœur** valiant
colère *f.* anger, wrath, indignation, passion
combat *m.* battle, fight, fighting, struggle, combat, conflict; **rendre combat** fight, resist
combattant *m.* combatant, fighter, champion
combattre fight, struggle (with), resist, strive against
combien how many, how much
comble *m.* climax, consummation, crowning point, height, excess; **pour comble à** to complete, to crown
comblér crown, fill, overwhelm
comédie *f.* comedy, play
comédien *m.* actor (whether comic or tragic)
commandement *m.* command
commander command
comme how, as, like, as if (*was often used like comment*)
commencer begin, commence
comment how
commettre commit, do
commisération *f.* sympathy, pity
commun common, general; mutual; *sb. m.* common run
compatir sympathize (à with), commiserate, pity
comprendre understand, comprise, include
compte *m.* account; **faire trop de compte** esteem too highly, value too highly; **rendre compte** report
comte *m.* count
concevoir conceive, feel
concours *m.* crowd
concurrence *f.* rivalry, competition
condamner condemn
conduire conduct, lead
conduite *f.* conduct, treatment, construction
confesser confess
confiance *f.* hope, assurance, confidence, trust

- confondre** confound, upset, unsettle;
se confondre become confused, fall into disorder
- confus** confused, troubled, confounded
- connaissance** *f.* knowledge, acquaintance
- connaître** know, recognize, take cognizance of; **faire connaître** show, prove
- conquérant** *m.* conqueror
- conquérir** conquer, win
- conquête** *f.* conquest, prize
- conseil** *m.* council, resolution, counsel, advice
- conseiller** advise, counsel; *sб.* counselor, adviser
- consentement** *m.* consent
- consentir** consent, assent
- conserver** preserve, protect, save, keep, have still
- considérable** worthy of note, worthy of consideration, important
- considérer** consider, think, find out
- consoler** console, soothe, alleviate
- constance** *f.* constancy, firmness
- consulter** consult, hesitate, deliberate (*was often used in these meanings of délibérer*)
- consumer** consume; **se consumer** be exhausted, be worn away, be consumed
- conte** (*often found in place of compte*) account; **rendre conte** give an account; make a report; **faire si peu de conte** care so little for
- content** content, satisfied, pleased
- contentement** *m.* satisfaction, joy
- contenter** please, satisfy; **se contenter** be content, be satisfied
- contraindre** constrain, restrain, force
- contrainte** *f.* constraint, restraint, force
- contraire** different; **au contraire** to the contrary
- contre** against, contrary to; **contre terre** upon the ground
- contredire** contradict
- contrée** *f.* country, land, region
- contribuer** contribute
- convenir** suit; be suitable
- convier** invite, urge
- copie** *f.* copy
- corps** *m.* body
- côté** *m.* side, direction; **des deux côtés** in either case, in any case; **de tous côtés** in all directions; **d'un côté entre (deux)** toward one of; **d'un et d'autre côté, des deux côtés**, in either case; **de son côté** in his favor; **du côté de** in regard to, on the part of
- coucher**: **se coucher** lie down
- couler** shed, flow; **faire couler** shed, instill
- couleur** *f.* color, excuse; **sans couleur** colorless, pale; **sous couleur** under pretext
- coup** *m.* blow, thrust, stroke, act; matter; **coup d'épée** sword stroke; **coup d'essai** trial blow; **coup de maître** master-stroke, blow of a master; **du premier coup** from the beginning; **encore un coup** once more
- coupable** guilty; *sб.* offender
- couper** cut, cut off
- cour** *f.* court

- courage** *m.* courage, heart, character, spirit, resolution (*in classic seventeenth-century tragedy often used synonymously with cœur*); **sans** courage cowardly
- courir** run, hasten, run through, hasten through; follow, flow; **courir** fortune be at stake; **courir** hasard be endangered, be compromised; **courir au trépas** court death
- couronne** *f.* crown
couronner crown
- courroux** *m.* wrath, anger, indignation
- cours** *m.* course, source
- courtisan** *m.* courtier; **les courtisans** those of the court
- coûter** cost
- coutume** *f.* custom
- couvert** (*pp. of couvrir*) covered
- couvrir** cover
- craindre** fear, dread, be afraid of;
à craindre to be feared, fearful;
ne craindre point have no fear;
sans rien craindre without fear
- crainte** *f.* fear, dread
- crêpe** *m. and f.* crape
- cri** *m.* cry
- crier** cry out, cry out for, shout
- criminel** criminal, guilty
- croire** believe, think, expect, rest assured, accept; **en croire** rely on, depend on, take one's word for it
- croître** grow, increase (*often used transitively in the seventeenth century*)
- cruauté** *f.* cruelty, hardship, misfortune
- cruel cruel, harsh; *sb.* cruel one, unfeeling man
- cuisant** sharp, piercing, intense
- curiosité** *f.* curiosity
- cypres** *m.* cypress, sign of mourning
- daigner** deign, condescend
- dans** in, into, amid, within, to
- davantage** more, longer; **en faut-il davantage** is not that enough
- de** of, from, on account of, over, by, with, as to, in, in regard to, for, than
- débat** *m.* strife, discussion
- décevoir** deceive, disappoint, delude, lead astray; **se décevoir** be led astray
- déchirer** tear, pierce, rack, rend, harrow
- décider** decide, come to a decision
- découvrir** discover, find; **se découvrir** become known, be revealed
- décret** *m.* decree
- dédaigner** disdain
- dédain** *m.* disdain, scorn
- dedans** within, in (*used in the earlier editions of the poet's works for dans, but in later editions he substituted dedans by dans whenever possible*); **au dedans** within
- dédire** disown, gainsay, desist
- défaire** defeat, undo
- défaite** *f.* defeat
- défaut** *m.* defect, fault
- défendre** defend (*de* against)
- défense** *f.* protection, defense; **sans défense** defenseless
- dé fiance** *f.* distrust
- défigurer** disfigure

- dégager** redeem, clear, get free
dégénérer degenerate
degré *m.* degree, grade
déguiser disguise, conceal
déjà already, now, even
délà on the other side, over, beyond
délaisser : se délasser rest
délibérer deliberate (upon), waver
délier loosen, disconnect
délivrer deliver, free from
demain *m.* to-morrow
demande *f.* demand
demander demand (à of), ask for, call for, seek
démentir belie
demeurer remain, continue, persist
demi : à demi half
dénier deny
dénouement dénouement, conclusion
dénué devoid
départ *m.* departure
dépendre depend (de on)
dépens *m.* expense, cost
dépit *m.* spite; en dépit de in spite of
déplaître displease, offend, grieve
déplaisir grief, sorrow (*much more expressive in the seventeenth century than in modern French*)
déplorable sad, wretched, deplorable
déplore deplore, lament, grieve, grieve over
depuis since, for the last
dernier last, basest, vilest, latter, absolute
dérober (à from) remove, take away, shelter, shield, steal
derrière behind; par derrière from behind
dès no later than, straightway, beginning with; dès que as soon as; dès aujourd'hui this very day
désarmer disarm
désaveu *m.* disavowal, denial
désavouer disown, disclaim
descendre descend, go down, disembark, land
descente *f.* descent, attack, inroad
désespérer drive to despair, distress, dishearten, be in despair
désespoir *m.* despair
déshonneur *m.* dishonor
déshonorer dishonor, disgrace, bring shame upon
désir *m.* desire, wish, longing
désirer desire
désobéir disobey, be disobedient
désobéissance *f.* disobedience
désordre *m.* disorder, confusion
désormais henceforth
dessoin *m.* design, plan, purpose
dessous underneath (them), beneath (it, them, etc.), by; before (*used early in the seventeenth century like sous*)
dessus *m.* upper hand, victory; au dessus above, superior; avoir le dessus gain the victory
destin *m.* destiny, fate, portent, prediction
destinée *f.* destiny
destiner destine
détaché (*pp. of détacher*) detached, disconnected
déterminément definitely
déterminer determine, make out
détestable detestable, abominable, odious
détruire destroy

- deuil *m.* mourning
 deux two, a few; tous deux both
 devant before, in front of
 devenir become, be
 devin *m.* prophet, seer
 devoir owe, ought, should, must, be due, is to, be obliged, be forced, have duties (à toward), be bound to, be indebted to
 devoir *m.* duty, respect, recognition, concession; être dans (or en) le devoir do well, be in the right
 dévorer devour
 dieu God; heavens!
 diffamer defame, degrade, debase
 différence difference
 différer defer, delay, put off, postpone
 digérer digest, absorb
 digne worthy, noble, convincing, sufficient
 dignité *f.* dignity, honor, power, title
 dire say, tell, speak, decree, assert, recite
 directement directly
 discerner discern, see, distinguish
 discord *m.* discord, anger, strife, distrust, variance (*seldom used in this figurative sense in modern French*)
 discourir discourse, descant, talk, converse, discuss; sans plus discourir without more words
 discours *m.* words, talk, discourse, discussion; ce discours these words; en discours in talk; un si charmant discours such pleasing words
 disgrâce *f.* disgrace, misfortune
 dispenser dispense, absolve, exempt from
 disposer dispose, make use of; en disposer order it, shape it
 disputer contest, struggle
 dissimuler dissemble, conceal from
 dissiper dispel; se dissiper be lost, vanish
 diviser divide; divisé en deux parts divided
 division *f.* estrangement
 dix ten
 domination *f.* domination, power, sway
 dompter master, overcome, conquer, subdue
 don *m.* gift; don, *honorary title given in Spanish to men of noble birth*
 donc then, therefore, pray
 donner give, destine; donner la loi dictate; donner passage give way; donner ordre attend to
 dont of which, from which, with which, at which, over which, whose
 dorénavant henceforth
 doubler double, increase
 douceur *f.* mildness, sweetness; charm, delight, pleasure, joy, clemency
 douleur *f.* grief, sorrow, pain, woe, distress
 doute *m.* (*sometimes feminine in seventeenth century*) doubt; sans doute doubtless
 douter (de) doubt
 douteux doubtful, in doubt, hesitating, faltering

doux gentle, fond, sweet, kind, mild,
light, pleasing, charming, gra-
cious, welcome

dramatique dramatic

drapeau *m.* flag, colors

droit *m.* right; **avoir droit** have
right, be right

dur harsh, severe, fierce, hard

durée *f.* duration, lapse of time,
continuance

durer last, endure, hold out, con-
tinue, subsist, persist

eau *f.* water

éblouir dazzle, fascinate, charm

ébranler shake

échafaud *m.* scaffold

échapper (*à*) escape (from); **il lui**
est échappé he (*or* she) has hap-
pened inadvertently

éclat *m.* splendor, glory, eminence,
show, outburst, outbreak, burst-
ing

éclatant brilliant, piercing, noble
éclater burst forth, shine forth,
come to light, appear, speak
out, find vent; **faire éclater** dis-
play, set forth

écouter listen (to), hear

écrire write

édit *m.* edict

effacer efface, blot out, wipe out,
destroy

effectivement really, as a matter of
fact

effet *m.* effect, result, accomplish-
ment, fulfillment, performance,
consequence, action, deed; **en**
obtenir l'effet accomplish it; **sans**
effet with impunity, without effect

effort *m.* effort, endeavor, labor;

effort sur violence to

effroi *m.* terror, fear, fright, dismay

égal *adj.* like; *m. sb.* equal, peer;
sans égal without a rival, un-
rivalled, unequaled

également equally, both

égaler equal

égaré bewildered, distracted

égarer: **s'égarer** wander, go astray,
be bewildered, become confused

élevé elevated, lofty

élever raise, extol, exalt, start;

s'élever rise, arise

élire elect, choose, select (*sup-*
planted in modern French by
choisir)

éloigner banish

embarrassant troublesome

embarrasser embarrass; **s'embar-**
rasser trouble one's self

embraser set on fire, burn; **em-**
brasé on fire

embrasser embrace, include

embuscade *f.* ambush

émouvoir move, affect, stir up,
arouse; **s'émouvoir** (*de*) be ex-
cited by, be moved by; **sans**
s'émouvoir without heat, with-
out excitement

empêchement *m.* hindrance

empêcher hinder, prevent, bar;
empêcher de vivre deprive of
life; **s'empêcher de** take care
not to

empire *m.* empire, kingdom

employer employ, use, make use
of; **s'y employer** go about it

emportement *m.* passion, hasti-
ness, violence

emporter carry off, carry away, sweep away, wash away, obtain, gain, turn; **l'emporter** gain the day; **s'emporter** go so far
empreindre impress, imprint, stamp
empreser: **s'empreser** hasten
emprunter borrow, seek
ému (*pp. of émouvoir*) moved, affected
en *prep.* in, to, while, like a, as a, as; **en ce que** from the fact that
en of it, its, by it, about it, concerning it
enchaîné enchained, in bonds, bound
encor(e) still, again, yet, even, time; **encore que** although; **encore un coup** once more
encourager encourage, cheer on
endurcir harden; **s'endurcir** become hardened, become inured
endurer endure, suffer, undergo, permit, allow
enfermer shut up, lock up
enferrer run through; **s'enferrer** run each other through
enfin at last, finally, now, and now, well, in short, then, after all, now then, at length
enfler raise, fill; **s'enfler** rise
enfuir: **s'enfuir** slip away
engager bind, pledge, plight, engage; **s'engager** be concerned, be hemmed in
enlever carry, win, carry away, surprise, capture
ennemi *m.* enemy; *adj.* hostile, hateful, at war
ennui *m.* grief, sorrow, despair (*in the seventeenth century this*

word was used in a much more serious and dignified sense than in modern French)
enorgueillir puff up, fill with pride, make proud
ensemble together, at the same time (*often corresponding to modern en même temps*)
ensuite afterward, in consequence
entendre hear, listen to, attend to, understand, mean; **se faire entendre** to be heard by
entier entire, complete, whole; **tout entier** entirely
entrailles *f. pl.* entrails, vitals
entre between, among, in, of; **entre nous** in confidence
entreprendre undertake, attempt
entrer (*dans*) enter, come in, pass in, go in; **entrer en** feel; **entrer dans leurs sentiments** fall in with their sentiments
entresuivre follow each other
entretenir speak to, talk to, entertain, hold up
entretien *m.* conversation, presence; **dans (or par) son entretien** conversing with him (*or her*)
envers toward, to, in the presence of
envi: **à l'envi** in emulation, as a rival of; rivaling
envie *f.* envy, malice, desire, purpose; **d'envie** covetous
envier envy, begrudge
envieux envious, rival
environner surround
envoyer send
épandre shed, pour out, spill (*in seventeenth century synonymous with répandre*)

- épargner spare, save, avoid
 épée *f.* sword
 épouser wed
 épouvantable fearful, awful
 épouvante *f.* fright, terror
 épouvanter terrify, frighten, fill with dread
 époux *m.* husband
 épreuve *f.* trial, test
 épris (*pp.* of éprendre) enamored, in love, smitten
 éprouver try, test, find out, be convinced of
 équitable just, righteous
 équité equity
 escadron *m.* squadron
 Espagne *f.* Spain
 espagnol Spanish, Spaniard
 espèce *f.* sort, kind, species
 espérance *f.* hope
 espérer hope, hope for, await, expect; espérer tout de put all one's hopes in
 espoir *m.* hope, expectation
 esprit *m.* mind, spirit, sense, soul, wit, heart (*used frequently by Corneille for cœur, e.g. v. 498, 1165*)
 essai *m.* essay, effort, test, trial
 essayer try
 essuyer wipe away, dry
 estime *f.* esteem, credit, reputation (*last two meanings peculiar to seventeenth century*)
 estimer esteem, consider, value
 estomac *m.* bosom, breast
 et and; et . . . et both . . . and
 établir establish, fix, set up
 étaler display, make a display
 état *m.* state, condition
 éteindre extinguish, end, put an end to, still, appease, forget; s'éteindre go out, die out
 éternel eternal, everlasting
 étoile *f.* star
 étonné astonished, of astonishment, dumfounded, wondering (*had in Corneille's time more of its primitive meaning of being overcome with astonishment*)
 étonner astonish, amaze, frighten; s'étonner de wonder at, marvel at
 étouffer stifle, drown, still, put an end to
 étrange strange, great, wonderful, awful, *cf. v. 298* (*last two meanings especially in classic tragic poets of seventeenth century*)
 être be, take place; être à belong to; c'est à moi it is my duty; ce n'est pas à moi it is not fitting for me; être aux mains be engaged in battle; quoi qu'il en soit whatever may come of it
 événement *m.* event, issue, case
 éviter avoid, escape
 examen *m.* examination, consideration
 examiner examine, look into, investigate, question, inquire into, consider
 exaucer hear, be granted, answer, grant
 excès *m.* excess, extreme; qui va jusqu'à l'excès excessive
 exciter excite, arouse; s'exciter be affected; sans s'exciter without heat, without passion
 exclamation *f.* outcry, exclamation
 excusable excusable, pardonable

excuse, exempt
odious, hateful
carry out
example, model, prece-

ercise, use, administer
exact, demand
ex: experience, test, trial;
l'expérience after testing,
making a trial
: explain, show; s'expli-
ne explained, speak out,
plainly, understand; ex-
: à ses yeux illustrate
z. exploit, deed
expose, set forth
urposely, on purpose
extreme, excessive, over-
ing
s f. extremity, act of des-
on

fabulous, of fable
unpleasant, vexatious,
l, repellent
: facility, lack of exigency,
less
way, manner, fashion;
te façon in this way; de
e façon que in whatever

weak, slight, small, feeble
f. weakness, frailty; avec
e faiblesse being so weak
il, err
ke, do, cause, have, let,
ve, bring about, form, ac-
ish, render, commit, be,
pread; faire attention pay
ion; faire bonne garde keep

good watch; faire connaître
show; me regarder faire watch
me; faire mon possible do my
best; en faire de même do the
same; faire son pouvoir do one's
best, do one's utmost; faire re-
naître give new life to; faire sa-
voir show, let know, inform; faire
voir show; ne faire rien have no
effect; c'en est fait it is all over,
it is done; lui faire grâce suffer
her (or him); pp. fait fashioned
fait m. deed, achievement

falloir be necessary, need, must;
s'en falloir lack, come short of
it, be far from; en faut-il davan-
tage what more! is not that
enough?

fameux famous, renowned, well-
known

famille f. family

fardeau m. burden

fatiguer tire, weary

faute f. fault; faute de for lack
of, through lack of

faux false, lying

faveur f. favor

favorablement favorably, at the
proper time, when the occasion
demands

fécond fertile, rich

feindre feign, pretend, claim; feint
supposed

femme f. wife

fer m. iron, steel, sword; pl. fet-
ters, irons

ferme steady, strong, stanch; de
pied ferme resolutely

fête: se faire de fête intrude, push
(or thrust) one's self in

- feu** *m.* fire, flame, passion, love, eagerness
fidèle faithful, constant, loyal
fidélité *f.* fidelity
fier proud, haughty, high-spirited, great
fièrement proudly, haughtily
figurer : *se figurer* imagine, fancy
filles *f.* daughter
file *m.* son
fin *f.* end, death, demise ; *à la fin* at length, at last
finir end, finish, come to an end
flamme *f.* flame, passion, love (*a stock word of the précieux of the seventeenth century*)
flanc *m.* side
flatter flatter, soothe, delude, deceive
flatteur *adj.* flattering, alluring, caressing
flétrir tarnish, blight, fade, blast
fleuve *m.* river, stream
flottant wavering, agitated, troubled
flotte *f.* fleet
flux *m.* flood, flow, tide ; *flux de pleine mer* high tide
foi *f.* faith, word
fois time ; *une fois* once ; *deux fois* twice ; *trois fois* thrice ; *à la fois* at the same time
fond *m.* bottom, depth, hold, basis
fonder found, justify, establish
fondre melt, dissolve
force *f.* force, strength, might, power ; *à force de* by dint of, by ; *par force* perforce ; *sans force* helpless, weak
forcer force, compel, constrain, subdue, demand, satisfy, storm
forfait *m.* crime
former form fashion, make ; *se former* conceive, breed, spring
fort strong, very, very much, indeed, great
fortement vigorously
fortifier fortify, strengthen
fortune *f.* : *courir fortune* be at stake
fou mad, wild
foudre *f.* (*but masculine in Corneille's time when used figuratively*) thunder, thunderbolt
foule *f.* crowd ; *en foule en masse*, all of you
français French
franchise *f.* freedom, liberty, sincerity
frapper strike, afflict, startle
frémissement *m.* quiver, tremor
frère *m.* brother
front *m.* brow, forehead
frontière *f.* frontier
fruit *m.* fruit, result ; *sans fruit* fruitlessly
fuir flee (from)
fuite *f.* flight
fumée *f.* smoke
fumer steam, reek
funérailles *f. pl.* funeral rites ; *a fait ses funérailles* is buried
funeste fatal, baneful, disastrous
gagner gain, win, reach
gain *m.* gain, winning
galerie *f.* gallery, corridor, passage
garantir protect, defend, shield, preserve
garde *f.* guard ; *prendre garde* take care, notice

- garder** guard, observe, preserve, take care; **garder bien** take good care (lest) (*often used by Corneille in the sense of modern* prendre garde de + infinitive take care not to)
- gendre** *m.* son-in-law, son
- gêne** *f.* trouble
- gêner** trouble, inconvenience, torment (*the last is nearer the primitive meaning of the word, which has become much less expressive in modern usage*)
- général** general
- généreux** magnanimous, noble, valiant, high-minded
- générosité** *f.* magnanimity, nobility of spirit
- genou** *m.* knee
- gens** *m. f. pl.* people; **gens de cœur** men of courage, brave men; **gens d'honneur** men of honor
- gentilhomme** *m.* gentleman, nobleman
- glace** *f.* ice, cold, frost
- glissade** *f.* slip
- gloire** *f.* glory, reputation, success; **sans gloire** unknown, unnoted
- glorieusement** gloriously, honorably
- glorieux** glorious, eminent, distinguished, noble
- gorge** *f.* throat
- goût** *m.* taste
- goûter** enjoy, taste of, partake of
- gouvernante** *f.* governess
- gouverner** guide, educate, rear, instruct
- gouverneur** *m.* governor, tutor, guardian, director
- grâce** *f.* grace, pardon, favor, thanks; **de grâce** I pray (thee), I entreat; **rendre grâces** give thanks
- grand** great, high, mighty; *sb.* noble
- grandeur** *f.* grandeur, magnitude
- graver** engrave, trace, write
- gré** *m.* will; **à son gré** as one pleases, as he pleases
- Grenade** *f.* Granada (former Moorish kingdom in Southern Spain, 1238-1492)
- gros** great, big
- Guadalquivir** river on which Seville is situated
- guère**: **ne . . . guère** scarcely, hardly
- guérir** cure, heal
- guérison** *f.* cure
- guerre** *f.* war
- guerrier** *m.* warrior; *adj.* warlike
- habit** *m.* mantle
- haine** *f.* hatred, anger, hate
- haïr** to hate, despise
- haleine** *f.* breath
- harnois** *m.* harness, armor (*modern spelling, harnais*)
- hasard** *m.* risk, danger, chance; **courir hasard** be endangered, be compromised
- hasarder** risk; **se hasarder** venture
- hâte** *f.* haste; **en hâte** in haste, forthwith
- hâter** hasten
- haut** high, lofty, noble, great
- hautain** haughty
- hautement** loudly
- hélas** alas; **des hélas** interjections (of grief), ahs and ohs

- héritier** *m.* heir
héros *m.* hero
heur *m.* good fortune, happiness
(used like the modern bonheur till the end of the seventeenth century)
heure *f.* hour, moment; à l'heure
même immediately, forthwith;
 sur l'heure at once; à toute heure
 continually
heureusement happily, skillfully
heureux happy, fortunate, blessed
hier yesterday
histoire history, story
historique historical, a matter of
 history
hommage *m.* homage; faire hommage
 do homage, pay homage
homme man; homme de cœur man
 of spirit, man of valor, valiant
 man
honnête well bred
honnêteté *f.* respectability
honneur *f.* honor
honorer honor, pay honor to
honte *f.* shame, modesty (*verse 1229*;
criticized by the Academy, but de-
fended by Vaugelas on the ground
that it might signify "la bonne"
or "la mauvaise honte," while
pudeur never meant anything but
"la bonne honte")
honteusement disgracefully, shame-
 fully
honteux shameful, ignominious,
 ashamed, poor; tout honteux full
 of shame
horreur *f.* horror
hôtel *m.* mansion
huit eight
- humain** *m.* human being, mortal
humour *f.* humor, mood, temper
hymen *m.* marriage, nuptials
hyméée *m.* marriage, union
- ici** here, now; d'ici from here, from
 now
idée *f.* idea, notion, suggestion, sen-
 sation
ignorant ignorant
ignorer ignore, not know
illustration glorification
illustre illustrious, noble, splendid
image *f.* image, likeness
imaginer imagine; s'imaginer im-
 agine, fancy, conceive
imiter imitate, represent
immobile motionless, inert
immoler sacrifice, immolate
immortaliser immortalize; s'im-
 mortaliser become immortal
immuable unchanging, undying,
 constant
imparfait imperfect, incomplete
impitoyable pitiless, merciless;
 impitoyable à without pity for
importance: d'importance important
importer concern, matter; que
 m'importe what care I? what's
 that to me?
importun importunate, troublesome,
 obtrusive, hateful
importuner intrude upon, trouble
imposer impose upon, enjoin on,
 lay on
imposture *f.* imposture, slander
impression impression, fancy
imprévu unforeseen, unlooked-for
impudence *f.* impudence, presump-
 tion

- impuissance** *f.* powerlessness, impotency, helplessness
impuissant impotent, powerless, helpless
impunité *f.* impunity
imputer impute
incertain uncertain, unsettled
incertitude *f.* uncertainty
incessamment incessantly, without ceasing, ever
incident *m.* incident, action
incliner incline, bend
incommodité *f.* inconvenience, embarrassment
incroyable incredible
indigne unworthy, base, vile, not worthy
indignité *f.* indignity
indirectement indirectly
indomptable unconquerable
inégal unequal, uneven
inégalité *f.* inequality, caprice, inconsistency, partiality
infâme infamous, defamed, disgraced
infamie *f.* infamy, shame
infante infanta (Spanish king's daughter)
infidèle faithless
infini infinite
infiniment infinitely
informer inform; **s'informer** inquire
infortuné unfortunate, hapless
ingénieux clever, ingenious, complex
injure *f.* insult, wrong, outrage
injurieux offensive, unjust
injuste unjust, wrong, criminal
inquiétude *f.* care, distress, alarm, anxiety
insigne signal, distinguished
insolent insolent; **sól.** bold wretch
instant instant; **à l'instant** immediately, forthwith
instruire teach, instruct, inform; **s'instruire** learn
intéressé interested, concerned
intéresser: **s'intéresser** take interest in, intercede
intérêt *m.* interest, concern, claim, wish, part; **son intérêt** feeling for him
inutile useless, needless, unnecessary
invaincu unvanquished, unconquered
invention *f.* invention, method
invincible invincible, unconquerable
irrégularité *f.* irregularity
irréparable irreparable, irretrievable
irrité irritated, offended
irriter: **s'irriter** chafe, rage
issue *f.* outcome
jadis formerly, once
jalousie *f.* jealousy, uneasiness
jaloux jealous, grieved
jamais ever; **à jamais** ever, forever; **ne . . . jamais** never
jeter cast, shed, spread, throw, bring, breed, arouse, give
jeu *m.* game; **jeu de mots** play on words
jeune young, youthful
jeunesse *f.* youth; **avoir trop de jeunesse** be too young
joie *f.* joy, pleasure
joindre join, unite

- joue** *f.* cheek
jour day, light, life, time; **me mettre**
 au jour give me life; **se montrer**
 au jour manifest itself, appear
 freely; **voir le jour** live; **un jour**
 some day; **en pleine jour** in broad
 daylight
journée *f.* day, achievement, battle
(this use of the word was much
criticized at the time, but was
supported by the usage of other
writers of the period)
jug *m.* judge
jugement *m.* judgment
juger judge, decide, think
jusque(s) even, up to, even to;
jusqu'à to, unto, until; **jusqu'ici**
 thus far, as far as, even here;
jusque là that far, until then
juste just, right, righteous, well-
 founded, real
justesse *f.* propriety, accuracy
justice *f.* justice, reason
justifier justify

là there; **par là** in that way, thus,
 therefore; **so, thus; de là** in
 that way, whence
lâche cowardly, base, ignoble
lâché spoken, being uttered
laisser let, leave, give, abandon,
 cause; **laisser aller** yield to;
laisser choir abandon; **laisser de**
 + *infinitive* fail, cease; **laisser**
faire à permit
langue *f.* tongue, language
langueur *f.* languor, weakness,
 dullness, debility
languissant languishing, languid,
 weak, faint

larme *f.* tear
las tired, weary
laurier *m.* laurel (sign of triumph)
laver wash, wash out, wash away
 le it, so
leçon *f.* lesson, teaching, precept
légitime legitimate, just, justifiable,
 right
lendemain *adj.* following, next
lent slow, tardy
lequel which
leur their
lever: **se lever** rise, arise
lèvre *f.* lip
liaison *f.* connection; **ont leur liai-**
son are bound, are linked
libérateur *m.* liberator, deliverer
liberté *f.* liberty, privilege; **en**
liberté freely
libre free at liberty
lice *f.* lists, arena (place where
 duel was held)
licence *f.* license, lawlessness
lien *m.* bond, tie, affection, fetter,
 charm
lieu *m.* place, part, cause, reason,
 grounds (**de for**); **au lieu de** in-
 stead of, in place of; **avoir lieu**
 take place, have reason, have
 occasion; **donner lieu** give rise,
 occasion
limiter limit; **n'avoir rien de limité**
 have no limit
lire read; **faire lire** show
lit *m.* bed; **au lit d'honneur** on the
 field of honor
livre *m.* book
livrer give over, give up, give; **se**
livrer abandon, deliver, give
 one's self up

loi *f.* law, command; **faire la loi** dictate, lay down the law, rule absolutely; **donner la loi** dictate
 loim far, afar; loin de far from, instead of
 loisir *m.* leisure
 long long; au long at length
 longtemps long, a long time, at length
 longueur *f.* length, slowness, delay
 lors then; dès lors forthwith
 lorsque when
 louable praiseworthy
 louange *f.* praise
 louer praise
 lugubre funereal, ghastly, gloomy
 lui him, to him, to her
 lui-même himself
 lumière *f.* light, brilliancy
 lutte *f.* struggle
 lyon *obsolete for lion* lion

madame madam
 magnanime magnanimous; noble
 main *f.* hand, arm; être aux mains be engaged in battle, be fighting
 maintenant now
 maintenir maintain, uphold, support, sustain
 mais but, why! say
 maison *f.* house, family, stock
 maître *m.* master
 maîtresse *f.* mistress, lover, sweetheart; *adj.* main
 majesté *f.* majesty, highness
 mal badly, ill, with difficulty; *sb.* *m.* woe, trouble, misfortune, distress; mal à propos out of season
 malade invalid, patient
 maladie *f.* malady, weakness

malaisé difficult, hard
 malaisément not easily, with difficulty
 mâle male, vigorous, manly, bold
 malfait deformed, ill shapen
 malgré despite, in spite of
 malheur *m.* misfortune, disaster, woe, distress
 malheureux unhappy, unfortunate, luckless, wretched; malheureux! unhappy that I am!
 mânes *m. pl.* manes, shades
 manie *f.* mania, madness, folly
 manière *f.* method; manière dont way in which
 manquer (de) lack; break; manquer à fail
 marbre marble
 marcher march, walk, go, go about, proceed, advance
 mari *m.* husband, mate
 marque *f.* mark, trace, sign, token
 marquer mark, designate, signify, denote, show, give evidence of
 matin *m.* morning
 maudit accursed, wretched
 Maure (*more usual spelling More*) Moor
 mauvais poor, bad, poorly
 méchant bad, evil, weak
 médiocre ordinary, mediocre
 médisance *f.* slander, calumny
 médissant *m.* slanderer, calumniator
 meilleur better; le meilleur the best
 mélange *m.* mixture, commingling
 mêler mingle (à with), mix with, join
 même even, itself, same
 mémoire *f.* memory, fame; perdre la mémoire forget

- menace** *f.* threat, menace
menager husband, spare, save
menager *m.* steward
menu lesser, unimportant
mépris *m.* scorn, disregard, contempt
mépriser despise, scorn, set at naught
mer *f.* sea, water
mérite *m.* merit, value, worth
mériter deserve, merit, receive, be worthy of, gain, earn
merveille *f.* wonder, marvel
merveilleux marvelous, wonderful, great
mesure *f.* measure, connection
mesurer measure, proportion, gauge (à by); *se mesurer à* vie with, cope with, be gauged by
métier *m.* profession, trade; **métier de Mars** martial trade
mettre put, set, bring, give, heap, take; **mettre au jour** give life to; **se mettre** go about, begin
meurtrier *m.* murderer; *adj.* murderous
mien mine
mieux better, rather, clearer; **le mieux** the best
milieu *m.* middle, midst; **au milieu de** in the midst of, among
mille thousand, a thousand; **mille et mille** thousands and thousands
ministre *m.* minister
miracle *m.* miracle, wonder
mise *f.* **être de mise** be usual; **mise en scène** staging, stage effect
misérable wretched; *sb.* wretch
misère *f.* misery, distress
modèle *m.* model
modérer calm, restrain
moderne modern
mœurs *f. pl.* customs, moral habits, morals, principle
moi me; **être à moi** be mine
moi-même myself
moindre less, inferior
moins less; **moins de** less; **au moins, du moins, at least; à moins que** unless
moitié *f.* half
mollement laxly, weakly
moment *m.* moment, instant; **moment d'audience** a moment's hearing
monarchie *f.* monarchy, sway, dominion
monarque monarch
monde *m.* world, people; **tout le monde** everybody
monsieur *m.* sir
monter rise, come up, go up
montrer show, display; **se montrer** appear, show one's self
moralité *f.* morality play (dramatic compositions of earlier times in which the dramatic personæ represented the different vices and virtues)
More (*in Corneille's prose the spelling is usually Maure*) Moor
mort (*pp. of mourir*) dead; *sb. m.* dead man, dead; **la mort** death
mortel mortal, deadly, fatal
mot *m.* word, expression; **à ce peu de mots** from these few words, by these few words
moteur *m.* mover
moucheur *m.* snuffer

- mourant** (*pres. p. of mourir*) dying, languishing, pale; **mourante vie** languishing existence
- mourir** die, perish; **se mourir** be dying, die; **en me faisant mourir** by my death
- mouvement** *m.* movement, impulse, agitation, passion (*in the seventeenth century this word may refer to all the passions, however great; in modern times 'impulse,' 'start'*)
- moyen** *m.* means, way
- muet** mute, dumb, silent
- mur** *m.* wall; **aux murs** upon the walls
- muraille** *f.* wall
- murmurer** murmur (*de at*)
- musique** *f.* music
- nager** swim, float
- naissance** *f.* birth; **prendre naissance** be born
- naître** be born, arise, rise, begin, spring up; **faire naître** bring to life, produce
- naturel** natural; *sb. m.* disposition
- nauffrage** *m.* shipwreck
- navarrois** of Navarre; *pl.* men of Navarre
- ne**: **ne . . . pas** not; **ne . . . personne** nobody; **ne . . . plus** no longer; **ne . . . que** only
- né** (*pp. of naître*) born; **bien né** well born, noble
- néanmoins** nevertheless
- nécessaire** necessary, essential; *sb. m.* necessity
- négligence** *f.* negligence, delay
- négliger** neglect, leave undone
- nerf** *m.* nerve, sinew
- ni** nor; **ni . . . ni** neither . . . nor
- nier** deny
- niveler** level, bring down
- noblement** nobly
- nœud** *m.* knot, tie, bond
- noir** black
- nom** *m.* name; **au nom** in the name
- nombre** *m.* number
- nommer** name, call; **se nommer** give one's name
- non** no, not
- notre** our
- nôtre** ours; **les nôtres** our men
- nourri** (*pp. of nourrir*) strengthened, trained
- nourrir** feed (*de on, upon*), nourish, foster, bring up, rear
- nourriture** *f.* food, nourishment, fuel
- nous** we, us, to us
- nouveau** new, another; **de nouveau** again; **tout de nouveau** once more
- nouvelle** *f.* news
- nuage** *m.* cloud
- nuire** (*à*) harm, hurt, injure, spoil, stand in the way
- nuît** *f.* night; **de nuit** by night
- nul** no
- obéir** obey
- obéissance** *f.* obedience
- objet** *m.* object, view, person, subject; **l'objet** the beloved; **cet objet** this; **tous les objets** everything
- obliger** oblige, compel, force
- obscur** dim, dark
- obscurcir** darken, bedim, becloud
- obscurité** *f.* obscurity, doubt
- observer** observe

- obstiner** : s'obstiner persist, insist
obtenir obtain, succeed (de in), gain, get; **en obtenir** l'effet accomplish it
occasion *f.* occasion, chance, opportunity
odieux odious, hateful
œil *m.* eye, mien; **à mes yeux** in my sight
œuvre *f.* work
offense *f.* offense, affront, insult, wrong
offenser offend, injure
offenseur offender
offre *f.* offer
offrir offer; **le premier offert** the first who comes
ôir hear (*obsolete*)
ombrage *m.* umbrage, suspicion, care, fear
ombre *f.* shadow, spirit, shelter, protection, shade
on one, we, any one
onde *f.* wave, billow
opposer oppose; s'opposer be opposed, stand in the way (à of)
opprimer oppress
or *m.* gold; d'or golden
orage *m.* storm, tempest
ordinaire customary, ordinary; d'ordinaire ordinarily, usually
ordonner ordain, decree, prescribe (de for), command, order, draw up, arrange, enjoin upon
ordre *m.* order, command, measure, rule; y donner ordre attend to it
orgueil *m.* pride, boast
ornement *m.* ornament, adornment, embellishment
oser dare, can, may, attempt
ôter take from, deprive, relieve, take away (à from), rid (*often used by Corneille in the sense of tirer de*)
ou or; **ou . . . ou** either . . . or
où where, how, in which, to which, how far, whither, which way; d'où whence; **par où** how, in what way
oublier forget
ouïr hear (*scarcely used in modern French except in infinitive and past participle, but found in several tenses in the seventeenth century*)
outrage *m.* outrage, insult; faire outrage offend, wrong, insult
outrager outrage, insult, offend, wrong
outré plus outre farther; **outré que** aside from the fact that
outré overwhelmed, transported
ouvert (*pp. of ouvrir*) open, unguarded, pierced
ouvrage *m.* work
ouvrir open, lay bare; **faites ouvrir le camp** throw down the barrier (*i.e.* for the duel or tournament)
païs *m.* (*earlier orthography for pays*) country
palais *m.* palace
palme *f.* palm
pâmer swoon, faint (de from)
pâmoison *f.* fainting, swoon
panique wild, confused
par by, through, at, from
paraître appear, seem, come; **faire paraître** show

paraphraser paraphrase
parce que because
pardonnable pardonable, excusable
pardonner pardon, forgive
pareil equal, such, the same, peer,
 similar; **sans pareil** unrivaled;
mes pareils such as I
 paresse *f.* indolence, laziness,
 slowness, coolness
parfait perfect
parler speak, say
parmi among, in, with, amid,
 along
parole *f.* word
part *f.* part, place; **avoir part à**
 share in; **de la part de** from, on
 the part of, in the name of; **de**
ma part for me, from me; **de votre**
part in your name; **prendre part**
à share in; **y prendre grande**
part take great interest in it, be
 deeply concerned in it
partager share, divide, disturb
parterre *m.* pit
parti *m.* party, match, part, side;
divisé en deux partis divided;
prendre son parti take one's part;
 side with him, her, etc.
particulier particular, special
partie part, division, adversary;
faire partie [be a part
partir start, set out, come from,
 go away
partisan *m.* partisan, adherent,
 friend, aid (*used by Corneille of*
things as well as persons)
partout everywhere, continually
pas *adv.* ne . . . **pas** not
pas *m.* step, pace
passage *m.* passage, vent

passé *m.* past
passer pass, exceed, surpass, go
 over; **passer en** become; **passer**
pour be looked upon as, be con-
 sidered; **se passer** take place,
 go on, exist; **se passer de** do
 without
passion *f.* passion, love
paternel paternal
pathétique pathetic
patrie *f.* country, fatherland
pauvre poor
payer pay, pay for, reward
pays *m.* country
peindre paint, depict, show
peine pain, distress, torment, hard-
 ship, labor, difficulty, effort, pen-
 alty, punishment; **à peine** hardly,
 scarcely, just; **avoir peine** be
 sorry, be disappointed; **en peine**
 at a loss, in doubt; **qu'il a peine**
 how hard it is
pencher incline (*often used transi-*
tively by Corneille, cf. verses 16,
1701); **pencher du côté de** favor
pensée *f.* thought, mind
penser think, expect, mean, hope,
 intend; *sb. m.* thought
percer pierce, wound
perdre lose, be fatal to, waste, ruin,
 be the death of, undo, give up,
 lack; **perdre la mémoire** forget;
se perdre be lost
père *m.* father
perfide unfaithful, false, faithless;
sb. wretch, traitor
perfidie *f.* perfidy, act of treach-
 ery, deed of treachery
péril *m.* peril, danger
périr perish, die

- permettre permit, allow, grant;
 est-il jamais permis is it ever
 right?
 personnage *m.* character
 personne *f.* person, anybody; per-
 sonnes people; ne . . . personne
 nobody
 persuader persuade, convince
 perte *f.* loss, fall, destruction, death
 petit little, small, slight, mean
 peu little, hardly; peu de little, lack
 of, few; un peu a few, a little
 peuple *m.* people, nation
 peur *f.* fear; de peur (que) for fear
 (that), lest; sans peur fearlessly
 peut-être perhaps, maybe, possibly
 philosophe *m.* philosopher
 pied *m.* foot; de pied ferme reso-
 lutely
 pillage *m.* pillage, plunder
 piller lay waste, devastate
 pitié *f.* pity
 pitoyable pitiable
 place *f.* place, fortress, square
 placer place, locate
 plaie *f.* sore, wound
 plaindre pity, have sympathy; se
 plaindre complain
 plainte *f.* complaint, lament
 plaire please, be pleasing to; se
 plaire like, enjoy
 plaisir *m.* pleasure, joy, delight
 plat *m.* flat
 plein full, open
 pleur *m.* tear
 pleurer weep, weep for
 plonger plunge, immerse
 plupart *f.* most, majority
 plus more, longer, any longer; le
 plus the most; plus . . . plus the
 more . . . the more; non plus
 either; de plus more
 plusieurs several, some, many
 plutôt sooner, rather, still
 poème *m.* poem
 poésie *f.* poetry
 poétique poetic
 poing *m.* fist, hand; au poing in
 hand
 point *adv.* no; ne . . . point not,
 not at all, by no means, in no
 way; point du tout not at all
 point *m.* point, degree, matter,
 break, state, case; point du jour
 dawn
 pointe *f.* point, play on words, con-
 ceit; pointe des armes sword's
 point
 pompe *f.* pomp, magnificence (*in*
the seventeenth century "pompe"
meant any kind of display,
whether funeral or triumphant)
 pompeux magnificent, full of splen-
 dor (*cf. note on pompe above*)
 populaire popular; of the people,
 common
 port *m.* port, harbor, haven; sur
 le port at the harbor
 porte *f.* door
 porter bear, carry, bring, deal,
 strike, show, esteem, raise,
 wear, have, incline; le porter
 trop haut go too far; se porter
 proceed, commit; s'y porter do it
 poser set, lay down, put forward
 posséder possess, be master of, win,
 fill, fill with
 possession possession; de ma pos-
 session of possessing me, of
 winning me

possible possible, might; *faire mon possible* do my best
 posture *f.* posture, attitude
 pour for, as, in order to, to, through, though, in; *pour grand que* however great
 pourquoi why
 poursuite *f.* pursuit, action, prosecution, suit, redress, act
 poursuivre pursue, prosecute, seek, bring suit against, beset, continue, go on
 pourtant however, nevertheless
 pousser urge (on), raise, utter, excite, provoke, incite, push, bring, exhale
 poussière *f.* dust
 pouvoir be able, can, may, be allowed; *se pouvoir* be possible
 pouvoir *m.* power; *faire mon pouvoir* do my best
 précieux precious, of value, valuable, euphuistic, affected (*term applied to the affectedly refined and cultured people of the seventeenth century*)
 précis exact, precise
 précisément exactly
 préférer prefer, choose
 premier first
 prendre take, take up, seize hold of, capture, gain, choose, have, find, seek; *prendre naissance* be born; *prendre son cours* have its source; *prendre garde* notice; *prendre son parti* side with him; *y prendre grande part* be deeply concerned in it; *prendre parti* take sides; *se prendre à* make an attack upon, contend with

préparer prepare, lay up
 près near; *de plus près* more closely
 prescrire prescribe, set, enjoin upon
 présence *f.* presence; *en présence* in view, exposed
 présent present, ready, at hand; *à présent* now
 présenter present, offer; *se présenter* appear
 présomptueux presumptuous; upstart
 presque almost
 pressant urgent, imminent
 presser press, oppress, urge on, crowd, impel, incite, be urgent, press back, crowd back, spur on, make give way, hurry
 présumer imagine, presume
 prêt ready
 prétendre pretend, hope for, demand, intend, propose, claim, aspire (*often used in the seventeenth century with sense of réclamer, ambitionner*)
 prêter lend, loan, give rise
 prétexte *m.* pretext
 preuve *f.* proof
 prévenir prevent, avert, forestall
 prévoir foresee
 prier pray, beg of
 princesse *f.* princess
 principal principal, primary
 prise *f.* hold; *en venir aux prises* begin fighting
 priser prize
 prisonnier *m.* prisoner
 priver deprive, bereave
 prix *m.* price, reward, prize

- probabilité *m.* probability
 procédé *m.* conduct, usage
 procès *m.* suit, trial
 proche near, near at hand
 prodiguer lavish
 produire produce, accomplish, inspire, bring forth, give; *se produire* appear, become known
 profond deep, profound
 promesse *f.* promise
 promettre promise; *se promettre* expect
 prompt sudden, prompt, ready, quick, rapid, speedy
 promptitude *f.* hastiness, abruptness, brusqueness
 propos *m.* word; à propos well; à quel propos why; mal à propos wrongly, unseasonably, out of season
 proposer propose, bring up
 propre own, suitable
 proscrire proscribe, destroy
 province *f.* province, state (*Corneille* often used this word in the sense of *état*)
 publier publish, proclaim, herald, declare
 puis then
 puisque since
 puissance *f.* power, spell, reign
 puissant strong, great, mighty
 punir punish
 pur pure
 pureté *f.* purity, entirety, perfection
 quand when, though
 quant à as to, as for
 quantité *f.* a great many
 quatre four, a few
 que what, which, whom, how
 que as, than, that, only, how much; que de how many, how much
 quel what, what a
 quelque some, any; quelque que however, whatever; quelque chose something; quelques-uns some
 quelquefois sometimes
 querelle *f.* quarrel, wrong, cause (often used by writers of classic tragedy in the sense of 'cause' or 'defense')
 quereller: *se quereller* quarrel, dispute, be quarreling
 qui who, whom, he who, him who, which; qui que ce soit whichever it be, whoever it be
 quitte free, acquitted, discharged
 quitter abandon, give up, forsake, leave
 quoi what, which; quoi que whatever; quoi qu'il en soit however it may be; sur quoi whereupon
 quoique although
 rabattre humble, lower
 race *f.* race, line, ancestry, house
 raconter relate, tell of
 raison *f.* reason; tirer ma raison take my revenge, avenge myself
 raisonnable reasonable, suitable; peu raisonnable unreasonable
 rallier rally
 ramper crawl, be prosy
 rang *m.* rank, degree, station, kind, place, position, quality
 ranger arrange, draw up in order, reduce, subject, bring down (used by *Corneille* in this sense like *réduire*)

- rapport** *m.* report, account
rare rare, distinguished, unusual
rarement rarely
rassis calm, collected
ravager ravage, lay waste, devastate
ravaler debase, lower
ravi glad, filled with joy; pleased
ravir take from, deprive of, snatch from, cut off, charm, delight, please, destroy
rebelle rebellious, refractory
rebeller : *se rebeller* rebel (*word became obsolete later*)
recevoir receive
rechercher seek, seek out
récit *m.* account, report, story, narration
recommander recommend
recommencer begin again
récompense *f.* recompense, reward
récompenser recompense, reward
reconnaître recognize, know, observe, acknowledge, confess
recourir recur, have recourse
recours *m.* recourse
recouvrir recover, gain
reculer put off, delay, set back, retard
redevable beholden, indebted
redire repeat, censure
redonner restore, give again
redoublement *m.* redoubling, increase
redoubler redouble, increase, add to
redoutable terrible, fearful, dreadful
redouter fear, dread ; *à redouter* to be feared, fearful
réduire reduce, bring, compel
réfléchir reflect
reflux *m.* ebb, ebb-tide
refus *m.* refusal, denial
refuser (*de*) refuse, reject, decline ; *en refuser* refuse it
réfuter refute
regagner regain
regarder regard, look at, behold, look upon, examine, concern, watch, belong to, be due (*no longer used in these last two meanings*)
régir rule, govern
règle *f.* rule
régner rule, reign, prevail
regret *m.* regret ; *à regret* regretfully, with regret ; *regret de* regret for
régulier regular, according to rule
rehausser heighten, enhance
rejeter reject, throw back
relâcher give up, lose ; *se relâcher* falter
relever set off, heighten, relieve ; *se relever* rise, arise, recover
remarque *f.* remark, observation
remarquer remark, observe, note, notice, perceive
remède *m.* remedy, help, aid, resource ; *sans remède* past remedy, irretrievable
remédier remedy, help ; *y remédier* cure it
remerciement *m.* thanks
remettre give over, intrust, give up, present, take back, conduct, calm, compose, quiet, set right, put off ; *s'en remettre à* leave it to
rempart *m.* rampart, bulwark

- remplir** fill, fill out, give
renaître be born again, spring up again, revive, be restored; **faire renaître** bring back to life, give new life to
rencontrer find, combine; **se rencontrer** be, be found
rendre render, give back, restore, give up, make, leave, give, pay back, repay; **rendre combat** give battle, resist; **rendre compte** give an account, make a report, report; **se rendre** surrender, become
renfort *m.* reinforcement
renom *m.* renown, reputation, fame, name; **sans renom** unknown
renommée *f.* renown, reputation
renoncer (à) renounce, give up
rentrer go in, retire
renverser overthrow, reverse, destroy, defeat, overturn, foil
répandre shed, pour out, spill
réparer retrieve, redress, repair, make reparation; **se réparer** be atoned for
repentir repent; **se repentir** repent
repentir *m.* repentance
répliquer reply, answer
répondre answer, respond, give answer, correspond, be in accordance with; conform; **répondre de** be responsible for
reporter bear back, carry back, carry
repos *m.* repose, rest, calm, peace
reposer rest, repose, calm
repousser repulse, repel, parry, throw back, push back
reprendre regain, take back, recover, revive, resume, censure (de for)
représenter represent, act
reproche *m.* reproach
reprocher reproach, blame, taunt with
république *f.* republic
reputer esteem, consider
réserver reserve
résistance *f.* resistance, hindrance; **sans résistance** freely
résister (à) resist, make resistance
résoudre decide, persuade (*no longer used in this sense with personal direct object*); **se résoudre** resolve (à upon)
respect *m.* respect (de for); **sortir du respect** lack respect
respecter respect, consider, esteem
respirer breathe, live, languish
ressentiment *m.* resentment, anger
ressusciter bring back to life
reste *m.* rest, remainder, remnant; **au reste** meanwhile, moreover, besides, and now, by the way (*much like cependant in modern French*)
rester remain
restituer restore
retenir retain, hold back, restrain
retirer shelter; **se retirer** withdraw, retreat, draw back
retour *m.* return; **de retour** returning, in return
retourner return
retraite *f.* retreat; **faire retraite** retreat
retrouver find
réussir succeed (à in)

- revanche** *f.* revenge; *en revanche* in return, then
revancher revenge; *pour s'en revancher* for compensation (*see verse 1798, note*)
revenir return, come back
rêverie *f.* reverie, thought
revers *m.* reverse, misfortune
revivre revive
revoir *see* again, again *see*
révolter: *faire révolter* arouse, excite, inspire; *se révolter* revolt, rise in rebellion
révoquer revoke, recall
ride *f.* wrinkle
rien nothing, naught, anything; *ne . . . rien* nothing
rigoureux severe, strict, harsh
rigueur *f.* rigor, severity, harshness, cruelty, austerity, peremptoriness, destiny
roi *m.* king
rôle *m.* part, rôle
roman novel, romance, fiction
rompre break, destroy, put to flight
rougir redden, blush, be ashamed, grow red
royaume *m.* kingdom
rude rude, fierce, bold, hard
rue *f.* street
ruine *f.* ruin, death, destruction, loss
ruiner ruin
ruisseau *m.* stream

sacré sacred, holy
saint holy
saintongeais of Saintonge, a former province (now Charente-Inférieure) on the west coast of France near Bordeaux

salaire *m.* wages, recompense, reward
salut *m.* safety, salvation, welfare, interests
sang *m.* blood, family, race, offspring
sang-froid *m.* cold blood, coolness
sanglant bleeding, gory, stained with blood
sans without, but for; *sans que* without
satisfaction *f.* satisfaction, reparation
satisfaire satisfy, content, atone for, give satisfaction
sauver save, rescue
savant educated, learned
savoir know, know how, succeed in, learn of, be able, can; *faire savoir* inform; *le savoir bien* be sure of it
scène *f.* scene, stage
sceptre *m.* scepter
scrupule *m.* scruple, delicacy
sécher dry
second second, secondary
secourir aid
secours *m.* aid
secret *m.* secret; *le secret* secrecy; *adj.* hidden
séduire seduce, beguile, betray
seigneur *m.* lord
selon according, according to
sembler seem
semer scatter, sow, fill
sens *m.* sense
sensible sensitive, alive, sympathetic; *sensible à* in sympathy with
sensiblement clearly

- sentiment** *m.* feeling, sentiment
 (pour towards), judgment
sentir feel
séparer separate, part, sever, cut
 off, estrange
sept seven
servir serve (de as, for)
seul sole, alone, only, single, mere,
 very; moi seul by myself, alone
seulement only, simply, merely,
 even
sévère severe, stern, harsh
sévérité *f.* severity
Séville Seville, in Andalusia, a town
 of about 149,000 inhabitants
 (400,000 in Moorish days); be-
 came capital of Castile about
 1250
si if, whether, such, so; **un si** such a
siège *m.* siege, offices
signaler distinguish
signe *m.* sign
simple simple, mere
simplement simply
sincère sincere
sinon except, and yet
sire sire, lord, my lord
sitôt so soon; **sitôt que** as soon as
sœur *f.* sister
soi one's self
soin care (de for), attention; **avoir**
soin take care, attend (de to)
 (soin is used sometimes in the
 seventeenth century in place of
 modern **souci** worry, anxiety)
soir *m.* evening, night
soit so be it; **soit . . . ou** whether
 . . . or
soldat *m.* soldier
solide solid, well founded
- solliciter** solicit, arouse, urge, in-
 cite, plead with
sombre dark
songer think (à of), reflect (à upon),
 consider, remember
sonner sound; **faire sonner** extol,
 proclaim
sort *m.* fate, destiny, die, lot
sorte *f.* kind; **de la sorte** thus; **de**
sorte que so that; **en quelque**
sorte as it were
sortir go out, descend, spring, go,
 issue, come, depart, pour forth,
 leave, come out; **sortir d'erreur**
 be no longer mistaken; **sortir de**
la vie die; **sortir du respect** lack
 respect
sortir *m.* going out; **au sortir** as
 they come out, at the end of,
 after
sou *m.* cent
souci *m.* care, worry, concern, fear
soudain sudden; *adv.* suddenly,
 quickly, immediately
soufflet *m.* blow in the face, blow,
 buffet
souffrir suffer, endure, grant, per-
 mit, admit of, allow, let be (*in*
the seventeenth century souffrir
was often used much like per-
mettre, laisser)
souhait *m.* wish, hope
souhaiter wish, wish for
soulager solace, comfort, ease
soumission *f.* submission, compli-
 ance
soupçon *m.* suspicion
soupir *m.* sigh
soupirer sigh, mourn; **soupirer de**
 sigh for, sigh on account of

- source** *f.* source, origin, cause
sous under, beneath, to
soutenir sustain, maintain, support, uphold, bear up, receive
soutien *m.* support, stay
souvenir remember, recall; **se souvenir** de remember
souvenir *m.* memory
souvent often; **assez souvent** frequently, very often; **le plus souvent** generally
souverain *m.* sovereign; *adj.* sovereign, most, excellent
spectacle *m.* spectacle
spectateur *m.* spectator
spirituel clever, subtle
stratagème *m.* stratagem
stupide stupid
stupidité stupidity
subjuguer subjugate, subdue
submission *f.* submission, mark of respect, atonement (*Corneille preferred this older form, although soumission was more frequent even in his time*)
suborneur *adj.* alluring, enticing, seductive (*in modern French used only as a noun*)
subtilité *f.* subtlety, penetration
succès *m.* success, triumph, attainment, result (good or bad, *hence bon succès, mauvais succès*)
succomber succumb, yield, give way
suffire be enough, suffice
suffisant sufficient, enough, adequate
suffrage *m.* vote, support
suite *f.* suite, sequel, retinue, consequence
- suivre** follow, go on, succeed, attend
sujet *m.* subject, cause, reason, occasion; **sujet de** occasion for; **tout le sujet** the outcome
superflu superfluous, useless
suppléer supply, supplement
supplice *m.* torture, torment, punishment
sur over, at, above, upon, from, by, to, toward; **sur l'heure** at once
sûr sure, certain; **mal sûr** uncertain
sûrement certainly, surely
sûreté *f.* surety, security
surmonter overcome, surpass, conquer
surplus : **au surplus** however, besides
surprendre surprise, startle, beguile, deceive
surprise *f.* surprise, confusion
surtout especially, above all
survenir approach, arise, happen along
survivre (à) survive
- tache** *f.* spot, fault, blemish; **sans tache** faultless
tacher stain, sully
tâcher try
taire : **se taire** be silent, become silent, keep silent, hold one's peace, say no more
tant so, so much, so long; **tant de** so many, so much; **tant que** as long as, while, until
tantôt just now, a little while ago, but now; **tantôt . . . tantôt** now . . . now

- tard late
 tarder delay
 tarir dry up, remove
 te thee
 teindre stain, tinge, color
 teinture *f.* color, shade
 tel such; un tel such a
 téméraire rash, headstrong; *sb. m.*
 hotspur
 témérité *f.* temerity, rash act
 témoignage *m.* testimony, proof
 témoigner show, display, bear testimony, give credence to
 témoin *m.* witness
 tempête *f.* storm, tempest
 temps *m.* time, day; en même temps
 at the same time
 tendresse *f.* tenderness
 ténèbres *f. pl.* darkness
 tenir hold, take, have, keep, receive,
 utter, think
 terminer terminate, end, bring to
 an end
 ternir sully, stain, tarnish
 terre *f.* earth, ground, land; contre
 terre upon the ground
 terreur *f.* terror, fear
 tête *f.* head
 théâtre *m.* theater, stage
 tiers third
 tirer draw, draw on, remove; tirer
 ma raison avenge myself
 tissu *m.* web, series
 titre *m.* title
 toi thee
 toison *f.* fleece
 Tolède Toledo, capital of one of
 the foremost Moorish kingdoms
 in the *Cid's* day
 tolérer tolerate
- tombeau *m.* tomb
 tomber fall, come
 ton thy
 tort wrong; avoir tort be wrong
 tôt soon
 touchant *adj.* touching, affecting;
 prep. concerning
 toucher touch, concern, affect, come
 near
 toujours always, ever
 tour *m.* turn; à mon (à son *etc.*) tour
 in my (his, her) turn
 tourment *m.* torment, pain, anguish
 tourmenter torment
 tout *adj. and adv.* all, everything,
 any; tout le the whole; du tout
 at all; tous deux both; toutes les
 deux both
 toutefois yet, however
 tragédie *f.* tragedy
 tragi-comédie *f.* tragi-comedy (a
 play containing all the elements
 of tragedy except the fatal catastrophe at the end)
 tragique tragic
 trahir betray, desert, frustrate
 traîner carry on, drag on, drag out,
 protract
 trait *m.* shaft, pang, dart, feature,
 stroke, action
 traiter treat (de as)
 traître *m.* traitor; en traître treacherously
 trame *f.* woof, course, days
 trancher interrupt, cut off
 tranquille tranquil, still
 transport transport, passion, heat,
 outburst; *pl.* frenzy, emotions
 transporter arouse, affect, enrap-
 ture, carry away

- travail** *m.* toil, labor
travailler work, toil, strive (à for);
 se travailler strive anxiously
trembler tremble, quake, quiver
tremper dip, imbrue, bathe, wet, stain
trente thirty
trépas *m.* death, end
triomphant triumphant, full of triumph
triumpher triumph (de over)
triste sad
tristesse *f.* sadness, sorrow, grief
trois three
troisième third
tromper deceive, betray; *se tromper*
 be mistaken, be deceived, err
trompeur deceitful, treacherous, delusive, deluding
trône *m.* throne; *au trône* on the throne
trop too, too much, too long, too well, too clearly, too often; *trop de* too much, too many
trophée *m.* trophy
trouble *m.* trouble, distress
troubler trouble, disturb, confuse, distract, move; *se troubler* be agitated
troupe *f.* troop, crowd
trouver find, seek; *se trouver* be
tuer kill, slay, be the death of
tumulte *m.* tumult, disorder
tumultueux tumultuous
tutelaire tutelary, guardian
tyran *m.* tyrant
tyrannie *f.* tyranny
tyrannique tyrannical

un a, one; *l'un et l'autre* both; *un si* such a

unique only, sole
unir unite, join
unité *f.* unity
usage *m.* usage, custom, sway, power; *en usage* customary
user wear out, spend; *user de* make use of
usurper usurp
utile useful, valuable

vaillamment valiantly
vaillance *f.* valor, worth, model (*old usage*)
vaillant valiant; *m.* man of valor, valiant man
vain vain, proud, presumptuous;
en vain in vain
vaincre conquer, overcome, become master of
vainqueur *m.* conqueror, victor, vanquisher, master; *adj.* victorious, vanquishing
vaisseau *m.* vessel
valable valid, good, adequate
valeur *f.* valor
valeureux valorous, brave, valiant, of valor
valoir be worth, be, bring in; *valoir bien* be well worth; *valoir mieux* be better; *ce que tu me vau* what thou art to me; *ce qu'il vaut* his worth
vanité *f.* vanity, desire, ambition
vanter boast, boast of, extol, vaunt
veiller watch, keep watch; *veiller pour* watch over
vendre sell; *vendre bien* sell dearly
vengeance *f.* vengeance; *sans vengeance* unavenged

- venger** (de) *avenge* (on); *se venger*
 take vengeance
vengeur *avenger*
venir *come, spring*; *venons* *come!*
venir de *have just*; *en venir à*
bout *succeed, bring it to pass,*
accomplish it; *en venir aux prises*
begin the combat
véritable *true, real*
vérité *f. truth*
vers *prep. toward, to*
vers *m. verse, line of poetry*
verser *pour out, spill, shed*
vertu *f. virtue, strength, character,*
valor, courage (often used in the
two last meanings in earlier pe-
riods of the language)
vêtement *m. garment*
veuve *widow*
vicieux *vicious*
victime *f. victim*
victoire *f. victory*
victorieux *victorious*
vie *f. life, existence*; *sans vie* *life-*
less
vieillard *m. old man*
vieillesse *f. old age*
vieux, vieille, *old*
vif, vive, *keen, spirited, great, sharp*
vigoureux *vigorous, energetic*
vigueur *f. vigor, strength*
ville *f. city, town*
vingt *twenty*
vingt-quatre *twenty-four*
viol *violate*
visage *m. face, look, countenance,*
aspect, expression
visible *visible, evident, apparent*
- visite* *f. visit*
vite *quickly*
vivre *live (de on)*; *vive* *long live!*
vœu *m. vow, desire, prayer, wish*
voici *here, here is, this is*; **voilà**
venir *here' comes*
voie *f. way, course*
voile *m. veil*; *sail*
voir *see, look, look upon, watch*;
voir de plus près *watch more*
closely; *faire voir* *show*; *voir le*
jour *live*
voix *f. voice, vote*; *d'une commune*
voix *with one accord*
voler *fly, hasten, hasten away*
volontaire *voluntary*
volonté *f. will, disposition, con-*
sent
votre *your*
vôtre *yours*
vouloir *will, wish, demand, com-*
mand, be willing, would, permit,
be about to, try, expect, insist
on, lay claim, admit; *que veux-*
tu *ah well!* *en vouloir à* *aim at*
vouloir *m. will*
vous *you*
vrai *true*
vraisemblable *probable*; *sô. proba-*
bility
vraisemblablement *probably, in a*
reasonable way
vraisemblance *f. probability*
vue *f. sight, contemplation*

y *in it, there, here*
zèle *m. zeal*





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